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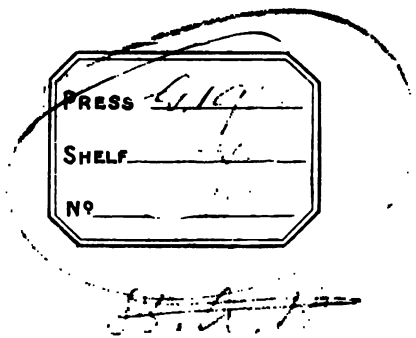

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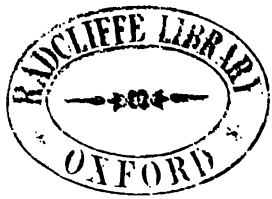
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THE

MOTHER'S PRACTICAL GUIDE

IN THE

Physical, Intellectual, and Moral

TRAINING OF HER CHILDREN:

WITH AN ADDITIONAL CHAPTER ON THE

Claims and Responsibilities of Stepmothers.

BY MRS. J. BAKEWELL.

"Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it."

THIRD AMERICAN EDITION.

New-York:

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CONTENTS.

Page

PREFACE 7

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY OBSERVATIONS.

The nature and extent of early education; the necessity and advantage of it. Parents advised to obtain correct views of their parental obligations. The maternal relation; its importance, dignity, and responsibility. Definition of physical, intellectual, and moral education 13

CHAPTER II.

ADVICE TO THE EXPECTANT MOTHER.

The physical, mental, and moral health of children affected by the mother's conduct and state of mind during pregnancy. Cautions against fretfulness, mental excitement, and violent bodily exertion. Medical attendant to be consulted early. Exercise. Perusal of good works on education and on parental duties recommended. Impressions caused by seeing disagreeable and deformed objects to be guarded against. State of the health not to be neglected. Early preparation of baby linen. Choice of a monthly nurse. The expectant mother directed to religion for support and consolation. . 22

CHAPTER III.

DIRECTIONS FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF INFANTS.

Mother's milk the only proper food. Modes of supplying its place when insufficient. Weaning. The measures to be adopted when the mother is altogether incapable of suckling. General remarks on the treatment of infants. Quack medicines. Dentition. Lancing the gums. Prejudices. Opinions of medical practitioners. Education of infants. Cleanliness. Walking. Clothes taking fire. Necessity of mothers committing their offspring to the care and protection of God 29

CHAPTER IV.

MISCELLANEOUS OBSERVATIONS ON THE TRAINING OF CHILDREN FROM TWENTY MONTHS OLD.

Activity of children. Toys. Employment. Jealousy to be guarded against. Working on the affections and on the fears of young children deprecated 55

CHAPTER V.

ON THE CLOTHING, ETC., OF YOUNG CHILDREN.

Clothing. Materials of clothing. Tight lacing. Sleep. Early rising. Food 64

CHAPTER VI.

ON PHYSICAL AND INTELLECTUAL EXERCISE.

Importance of equally exercising the body, the senses, and the mind. Bodily exercise. Modes by which the senses may be exercised out of doors. Necessity of allowing active exercise within doors when confined by unfavourable weather. Modes of exercising the senses within doors. Necessity of mental exercise. Specimen of a dialogue between a mother and her child. "Lessons on objects" recommended. Beneficial effects of infantile instruction. Necessity of repetition 79

CHAPTER VII.

INTELLECTUAL TRAINING.

The age at which children may be taught to read. Evils of precocity. Mode of teaching to read. Arithmetic. Writing. Geography. Infant schools 93

CHAPTER VIII.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS.

French. Music. Drawing. Dancing—the arguments in favour of, considered and answered 114

CHAPTER IX.

MORAL VIRTUES.

Habit of contradiction common to children. Obedience: necessity of its being early and uniformly inculcated; to be enforced with firmness, not with severity; care to be taken not to destroy energy of character. Denial of faults. Telling merely imaginative tales. Truthfulness on the part of parents necessary. Self-command to be cultivated in children. Self-denial. Disinterestedness and generosity to be encouraged. Quarrels of children. Importance of early training children to virtuous habits 129

CHAPTER X.

PUNISHMENTS AND REWARDS.

Object of punishment. Proper terms and distinctions to be used in speaking of the faults of children. Punishment to be appropriate to the fault committed. Modes of inflicting punishment. To be administered with promptness and certainty. Rewards—to be used sparingly; should be such as tend to excite the higher affections. Sympathy and praise preferable. An *interesting* fact. The pleasure of success to be

made the stimulus of good conduct. Necessity of teaching children to examine their motives. Danger of placing children in competition with each other 151

CHAPTER XI.

RELIGIOUS TRAINING.

Necessity of early religious training. The knowledge of God, and the duty of loving and obeying him, to be first inculcated. The nature of sin. The atonement and example of Christ. The influence of the Holy Spirit. The sacred Scriptures. The sabbath. The ministers of the gospel. Prayer 164

CHAPTER XII.

DOMESTIC AFFLICTION.

Possibility of disease attacking a child, however tenderly and assiduously nurtured. Directions and cautions to the mother under such circumstances. Considerations suggested to the mother, in case of bereavement. Duty of resignation. Sources of comfort 188

CHAPTER XIII.

CONCLUDING REMARKS.

The importance of prayer. Parental example. Faith. The prospects of the pious mother 198

CHAPTER XIV.

ON THE CLAIMS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF STEPMOTHERS.

Peculiar difficulties. Striking incident. Prejudices to overcome. Children should be prepared to receive her. She must strive to secure the affections of her new charge. Advice in reference to the older children. Grown-up daughters. Avoid partiality. Influence of her own maternal feelings. The most painful effects of a second family. Encouragements. Interesting anecdote. The union of two families. Concluding observations 204

APPENDIX 229

PREFACE.

No apology is requisite for laying before the public a work on the Early Domestic Training of Children, as the subject seems now to be exciting that kind and degree of attention which its vast importance demands. Still it is a subject on which some parents are comparatively ignorant, and to which others seem to be almost indifferent; and in many cases, where neither ignorance nor indifference can be fairly supposed to exist, all *systematic* training is deferred until children arrive at what is thought a proper age for learning to read, when they are committed to the discipline of a regular teacher. The object of this little work is to impress upon mothers the importance and practicability of laying the foundation of a good physical, intellectual, and moral education, during the first five or six years of a child's life.

Of my capabilities for the task I have undertaken, it will not be necessary to say much. I am myself a mother, and know from experience that the plans recommended can be easily followed, and that the results are, so far, highly satisfactory. I have assiduously watched the conduct of other mothers in their young families, and know from observation that the principles which I inculcate produce health, harmony, and intelligence, where properly acted upon, and that the neglect of them is accompanied with evils of the most serious magnitude. I have read with great attention many of the best works on the different branches of education, and have culled from them what I thought was the most calculated to assist me in forming my plans for the training of my own children. It is the result of this experience, this observation, and this study, that I am now presenting to mothers.

Had I been acquainted with any work calculated to supply the place of this, I should not have obtruded myself on public notice; but among the many valuable treatises on the subject which I have had the

pleasure of reading, I have not met with one, *written by a mother*, that has comprised what seemed to me the requisite directions for the early training of children.

To the works referred to in the Appendix, I am indebted for some of my best sentiments on education; and to the perusal of several of them before I became a mother, I attribute not only that degree of success which has hitherto crowned my maternal efforts, but that anxiety for the welfare of the rising generation which has led to the publication of this volume.

It will be a satisfaction to mothers to know, that in reference to those parts of the work which have any bearing on physical education, I was not satisfied with the information obtained from books and other sources. That part of the manuscript was submitted to the inspection of an experienced and skilful medical gentleman, who gave it his unqualified and cordial approbation

I have not attempted to write essays or dissertations on the subjects which claim the reader's attention, but have endeavoured to illustrate the principles laid down in a familiar

and simple manner. I have not aimed at what was probably beyond my reach, to gratify the *few*, but to benefit the *many*.

My work makes but little pretensions to novelty, unless it be in the arrangement; many obvious truths are, I trust, placed in a new and important light, so as to arrest the attention of the unthinking, and more fully to inform the judgment of the inexperienced

Little can, with propriety, be said to deprecate criticism, should my feeble attempts be honoured with notice. I have spared neither time nor labour in reading and thinking on the all-important subject which has occupied my pen; and if I fail, it will be from want of ability, not from want of attention.

16 *Clarence-street, Liverpool, March*, 1836.

PREFACE

TO THE SECOND EDITION.

It was not without considerable fear and hesitancy that the first edition of this little work was published; I cannot therefore but feel greatly encouraged by the very favourable reception it has met with.

Prompted by a desire to be more extensively useful, I now offer a second edition to the public, earnestly beseeching the Author of all good to crown this humble effort with his special blessing.

In compliance with the advice of several friends in whose judgment I place great confidence, I have made a few alterations and some additions, which will, I feel persuaded, add to the intrinsic merits of the work.

The corrected copy has been submitted to a medical gentleman, who is himself a father, and who has paid considerable attention

to the subject of education; to him I am indebted for several valuable suggestions of which I have gratefully availed myself; he assures me, that the directions given, and the principles inculcated, are, in his opinion, highly calculated to promote the bodily and mental vigour of those whose welfare is the object of my labours.

A regret has been expressed that I have not touched on the diseases most incident to young children: convinced, as I am, that none but medical professors can with propriety write on these subjects, I have studiously endeavoured to avoid encroaching on their department: but while I have abstained from prescribing for the cure of diseases, I trust the advice given will answer a better purpose, that of preventing them.

North-Parade, Halifax, August, 1836.

THE

MOTHER'S PRACTICAL GUIDE.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY OBSERVATIONS.

It may seem unnecessary, at the present time, when the wide diffusion of knowledge has become proverbial, earnestly to call the attention of parents to the subject of early education; and yet in our view of the subject, early education is by many either totally neglected or very inefficiently conducted. Indeed, according to the general acceptation of the term, it includes nothing more than the common branches of scholastic learning, increasing in importance and number according to the wishes and pecuniary resources of the parent, and the talents of the pupil: but these, however essential, are far from being all that is requisite. In *training* up a child, not for this world only, but for *another*, there is a higher aim than the acquirement of

languages, mathematics, and accomplishments. The temper must be carefully watched, corrected, and regulated; the mind must be informed on many subjects, which are not included in the general routine of school business; and above all, those religious precepts must be enforced, and those principles implanted, which, with the blessing of God, will prepare the youthful mind for the duties of this life and the joys of the life to come. If these things be indeed included in the term, how few can be said properly to educate their children!

The physical, intellectual, and moral training of children ought to be systematically, vigorously, and perseveringly pursued from their earliest infancy. It is during infancy and early childhood that those impressions are most easily made which are necessary to the development and cultivation of the mental faculties and affections; it is during childhood that habits of observation, attention, and obedience are to be formed, and that the principles of all the moral virtues are to be inculcated.

But how many parents rest in supineness till their children attain to four or five years of age, without making any efforts but for the supply of their bodily necessities and the preservation of their bodily health. We are not

to be told in this enlightened age that the human mind is like a sheet of white paper, ready to receive any impressions that we may wish to make upon it. No; for we find, by experience, that it may more properly be compared to a plot of ground, in which weeds will spring up the more abundantly the less good seed we sow in it. Cultivate it as carefully and as diligently as we may, weeds *will* spring up; but if we gently remove them as soon as they appear, they will be prevented from taking deep root, and from injuring those valuable and tender plants which it is our highest ambition to rear.

Let me then most strenuously urge upon all on whom God has bestowed children, the duty of using every means of enlarging their views of parental responsibility. For the attainment of this end, I would recommend that parents should converse much with each other, and also with any pious and intelligent parents with whom they may associate, on the plans best calculated to promote the temporal and eternal welfare of their offspring; that they should read with serious attention the best works they can procure on the subject; and, above all, that they should seek by earnest prayer the teaching of the Holy Spirit—that they may [see] the

great importance of the station they occupy; and be guided to the most efficient methods of discharging the duties that devolve upon them, firmly believing that they will be strengthened and blessed in the performance of those duties. But as the following pages are addressed especially to mothers, it may be useful to make a few observations on the *importance*, the *dignity*, and the *responsibility* of the maternal relation.

The *importance* of an object depends on its capability of conferring or of procuring happiness. The mother *cannot* sink into insignificance; whether she wills it or not, she is always either directly or indirectly contributing either to the welfare or to the misery of her children. Her words, her actions, the tones of her voice, the expression of her countenance, have all a powerful influence in forming the youthful mind. On her efforts depends, under God, the future well-being of her children, and her children's children. Her prayers, her example, her instructions are to educate the parents and teachers of another generation; to her exertions may the world be indebted for some of its brightest ornaments, and the church for some of its most valuable members and most devoted ministers.

It is much to be regretted that, in general,

so little regard is paid, either by parents or by children, to the *dignity* of the maternal relation. If we examine the pages of inspiration, we shall find that the term mother is applied to the true church, "in which believers are begotten and nourished up in the faith by the dispensation of the word and ordinances." Solomon says, "My son, keep thy Father's commandment, and forsake not the law of thy mother." When the apostle Paul exhorts Timothy to treat the "elder women" with respect, he bids him treat them "as mothers;" God himself, when he gave the law from Mount Sinai, recognised with equal force the maternal with the paternal power and dignity, "Honour thy father and thy mother." We willingly allow that the Almighty has placed the husband in authority over the wife; but as parents he has made them equal, and it is their duty to uphold each other. As children are left much more to the care of the mother than of the father, it is necessary that they should look up to the mother with entire confidence and respect. A mother who rules her own spirit, and who governs her children with firmness and gentleness, is, from the nature of the situation which she holds, and from the high obligations she fulfils, invested with peculiar dignity.

But to whom is the mother *responsible?* To her children. Should they arrive at maturity, and find that from her they have imbibed virtuous principles and good habits, they will joyfully acknowledge their obligations; should they, on the contrary, find that to her neglect they have to trace those headstrong passions and those vicious habits which are hurrying them to destruction, how bitterly will they reproach her! The world, too, may justly complain, if those whom she has been instrumental in bringing into existence should, through her inattention and indifference, become a curse and a scourge to their fellow-men. The church also may take up the lamentation of Jacob, and exclaim, "Me have ye bereaved of my children." The church naturally looks to the children of religious professors for its members, its officers, and its ministers, and may justly reproach them if its hopes be blighted through their unfaithfulness.

But O, ye mothers of our land, it is not by earthly tribunals alone that your maternal character will be judged. In that day, the great day of the Lord, you will have to give an account of the trust reposed in you. Your Judge will then say, "You were commanded to train *up your* children in the nurture and admonition

of the Lord,"—and how will you answer? .... I can dwell no longer on this solemn subject. Happy will that mother be, who, on that awful day, shall hear the approving sentence, "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

Every judicious, thinking mother is necessarily somewhat both of a philosopher and a metaphysician; yet she is not necessarily acquainted with the theories of philosophy, or with the phraseology of metaphysics. It is much to be regretted that some of our best writers on education have written in so abstruse and technical a style, as to be difficult of comprehension by many mothers, while the size and price of their works render them inaccessible to a large majority.

Before I enter upon the more immediate subject of this little work, some simple explanation of the terms employed may be useful, so that my meaning may be fully understood by all my readers.

By education I mean, not merely the imparting of scholastic knowledge, but whatever is said or done to a child, and whatever is said or done in his presence calculated to make an impression on his mind—for such impressions invariably tend to the *development* either of his mental powers,

or of the dispositions and affections of his heart.

Physical education relates to the promotion and preservation of health, and it bears an intimate connection with mental culture; as a weak and enervated body cannot fail ultimately to retard the improvement and development of the mind.

By intellectual education is to be understood, those means which are employed to cultivate the powers of the mind, by which those habits of thought are produced which are essential to the acquisition of knowledge, and by which the mind is stored with those ideas which are necessary in the various pursuits of life.

Under the term moral education is included, the cultivation of the affections, the government of the temper, the formation of habits of self-command, obedience, and truthfulness, and, above all, the communication of religious knowledge and the inculcation of religious principle. This is undoubtedly the most important department of education; but its successful prosecution greatly depends on the proper development of the intellectual powers, for where these have been materially neglected, it is always very difficult either to infuse religious knowledge or *to teach* the important art of self-government.

It is common for writers on education to treat of these departments separately, and in lengthened treatises it is desirable and necessary to do so; but as my efforts will be directed to composing a small and popular work on the early practical training of children, I shall adopt the plan in writing which, as a mother, I have had to adopt in practice, namely, in some degree to associate them. Certainly no mother can, without the assistance of others, attend fully to all these departments; she will often have to call in the physician, to employ the teacher, and to consult the divine; but she must have some knowledge of each department, and must watch with carefulness over all, if she is to perform, in the full sense of the term, the duties of a mother.

CHAPTER II.

ADVICE TO THE EXPECTANT MOTHER.

I AM now about to tread on delicate ground; but I could not discharge my duty, nor satisfy my conscience, if I did not here address some hints to those who are expecting soon to become mothers. It is to be feared that but few young married women are aware how much the future bodily health, mental vigour, and moral tendencies of their offspring, depend on their own conduct and state of mind during pregnancy. The bodily suffering which generally accompanies the first three or four months of this trying period is calculated to produce a fretful nervous temperament of mind, accompanied with a strong disinclination to bodily exertion, extremely injurious both to mother and babe. Against these feelings you must strive with persevering energy, and every kind of strong mental excitement and violent bodily exertion must be avoided. Endeavour to withdraw your mind from the contemplation of present suffering and of future trial, and cultivate that calmness and cheerfulness so essential to your own happiness, and the future well-being of your child.

Impress deeply on your mind, for no other consideration will operate more powerfully, that by giving way to impatience and despondency you will most probably entail upon your child the same defects of temper and of mind; whereas by cherishing a calm, cheerful, and grateful spirit, you may have the happiness of bringing into existence a being to whom life itself will be joy, one whose brilliant smile and happy laughter will beguile you of many a tedious hour of toilsome care. Doubtless you wished to become a mother, and you anticipate much pleasure from that endearing relation; be not, then, unwilling to make those sacrifices which the proper regulation of your own mind, under such circumstances, will necessarily require.

It will be well to avoid conversing on the subject of your expected trial, except with those in whose experience and judgment you can place great confidence: from them you may derive much valuable information that will tend to soothe and cheer your spirits, as well as to guide you in the preservation of your health. Let me also urge upon you to seek *early* the advice of your medical attendant, whose skilful and well-timed counsel will be of essential service, and may save you from dangerous, perhaps fatal, quackery.

Gentle out-door exercise cannot be too strongly recommended; it not only improves the health, but removes those anxious and fearful thoughts which at such times are so apt to press upon the spirits. Who has not observed on more occasions than one, what an immense load of care has been blown away by the cooling breeze, in the space of five or ten minutes. If the weather will not admit of out-door exercise, you must seek it within. If you have nothing that needs doing, make yourself work suited to your strength, or walk briskly in passages, or in cool rooms, and you will soon feel the benefits of the exertion.

Another suitable employment will be the reading of good works on education, and on parental duties.* Keeping your mind judiciously and actively occupied will produce a decidedly beneficial effect on the mental organs of your babe, as well as exempt you from the intrusion of desponding and injurious thoughts.

Medical professors differ so much in their opinions as to the effect of the mother's imagination on the physical formation of the babe, that it would ill become me to give a decided opinion on the subject. I may, however, with strict propriety urge you to acquire that self-

* See Appendix, No. 1.

possession which will prevent your being alarmed by the appearance of disagreeable or deformed objects. You know that you must encounter such. Prepare your mind to overcome the fear and repugnance you feel, by cultivating Christian sympathy toward them. Be thankful that your Creator and Preserver has made you to differ, and lift up your heart to him in fervent supplication that your beloved offspring may be perfect both in mind and body.

I know a lady who, during her pregnancy, removed into a neighbourhood where she was daily exposed to meeting an idiot boy. She endeavoured not only to cultivate kindly feelings toward him, but also to lead *him* to look upon *her* with kindness; and in a few weeks he would meet her with a smile upon his countenance, which plainly indicated that he possessed some of the best affections of the heart, though his mental powers were seriously defective.

It is not my intention in any degree to supply the place either of medical works or of medical advice; but it may not be improper here to warn the inexperienced mother against neglecting, even for a day, a constipated state of the bowels. Endeavour by diet, exercise, and gentle friction of the skin to restore regularity: should these means fail, ask the advice of your

medical attendant. Effects so serious have frequently been produced by females in these circumstances taking improper medicines, that I cannot too strongly urge you to be cautious. You may perhaps think that you are safe in taking the remedy that has agreed with a friend, but the diversity of constitutions is so great, that a medicine prescribed for one female might not agree with another, however eminent the prescriber.

No language can be too strong which is used to urge females, at such a time, to keep their dress sufficiently loose. Irreparable injury may be done both to mother and babe by neglect in this point. There is no need to be untidy or slovenly, but you *must* be free. Stays for such an occasion should be made with elastic goars, to reach quite to the arm-holes; these goars may be made either with elastic Indian rubber cloth, or with cases containing wires. By this plan there is no necessity for wearing them unlaced behind, which is inconvenient and dangerous; as persons accustomed to having the spine supported suffer much from its exposure.

I must now be allowed to say a few words on a subject peculiarly interesting to mothers. Let me advise you to commence the preparation of your baby-linen *early*, so that you may not

be obliged to sit to work too closely, when it will be both painful and injurious to bend over the needle. I do love to see neatly-made baby-linen: if it indicate a little maternal vanity, it indicates also maternal affection: but we must in no case sacrifice health to ornament. Many a mother would cast aside with precipitation the beautiful cap at which she so diligently works, were she sufficiently impressed with the idea that by continuing at it she would perhaps increase her own sufferings, and prevent the perfect physical development of her child.

Great care should be taken in the choice of a monthly nurse, as the health both of mother and babe will very much depend on her attention, kindness, and judgment. It is deeply to be regretted that women of respectability are not properly educated to take the entire management of females at this important crisis; but till the principles of physiology are more generally diffused, and until the existing prejudices of society against the acquisition of a knowledge of the various functions of the human frame are removed, an object so desirable is not to be expected. The best way to prevent evil results from the ignorance of the nurse, should she unfortunately be ignorant, is for you to possess yourself of all the knowledge within

your reach on the subject; and if any serious difference of opinion respecting treatment should arise, refer the matter to your medical attendant, and submit yourself implicitly to his decision.

I must not close this chapter without endeavouring to lead your thoughts to the only unerring source of guidance and support. And O, if you are not yet a determined follower of Christ, seek now in earnest an entire renovation of heart, and rest not till you possess the precious assurance that you are a child of God; you will then know on whom to cast your every care; you will feel that whether life or death be your portion, you are safe in the arms of the living God. He has promised, "I will never, never leave thee; I will never, never, never forsake thee."* You will be led to those sources of consolation so peculiarly the portion of pious females; you may apply to yourself that cheering passage, "As thy day is, so shall thy strength be;" you may expect with undoubting confidence the blessing of God in the discharge of all your maternal duties; and you will realize the truth of that encouraging declaration, "My grace is sufficient for thee."

* A literal rendering of the original of Heb. xiii, 5.—Ed.

CHAPTER III.

DIRECTIONS FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF INFANTS.

NEED I open this chapter with exhorting the mother to be tender over her newly-born babe? Ah, no! Next to self-love, a mother's love is the strongest affection of the human heart; and the exercise of the latter so fully contributes to the gratification of the former, that the principal danger is, that the babe should become the idol.

During the first three or four months of a child's life, little can be done except in its physical education; but we must constantly bear in mind, that the bodily health of the child will have an important influence on its mental capabilities, as well as on its temper and disposition. "The management of infants," to use the language of a talented writer on the subject,* "comprehends three essential objects—their food, clothing, and exercise; and the consideration of these things necessarily commences immediately after birth."

Except in extraordinary cases, the best and only requisite food is that with which nature has furnished the mother, and *if she can*

* The late Dr. Darwall.

supply a sufficiency, no other should at first be given. If she can but partly nourish her babe, a little thin gruel, either of oatmeal or of biscuit powder, may be given two or three times a day. If the bowels be relaxed, biscuit or arrow-root gruel will be better than oatmeal: in this case, however, endeavour to ascertain whether the irritation has been caused by the infant having too much or too nourishing food; if so, reduce the quantity or quality as circumstances require. The food should be pleasant to the taste, and perfectly smooth and free from lumps. Till the mother's milk is withdrawn, cow's milk should not be given, except in a highly diluted state, as one part milk to two of water, with the addition of a little lump sugar.

The time of weaning must be regulated by circumstances, but it is reasonable to infer that if there be nothing in the health either of mother or babe to make it necessary, it should not be until after the front teeth are cut; this will generally be before the seventh or eighth month. If you have a plentiful supply of milk, no artificial food will be required before this period, when the child should be gradually prepared to live without the breast. The gruel before named, or wheat bread scalded with water and *sweetened*, will be most likely to agree with the

babe till it is quite weaned: after which, milk and bread, oatmeal porridge and milk, plain light baked puddings and broths, will form an ample variety, if variety be thought necessary. Until the infant be able to masticate, nothing requiring mastication should be given.

When you commence weaning, let your infant have food only twice a day and in small quantities; gradually increase the frequency of feeding and decrease the frequency of suckling until the babe is entirely weaned. No greater cruelty can be practised than *suddenly* weaning an infant; it is injurious both to its health and temper. The mother must feel much, for she has lost *one* of her comforts, but the dear babe has lost its *all*.

Happy the mother who *can* suckle her infant; she who has not the power to do so is deprived of one of the greatest of maternal pleasures, while her toils and anxieties are more than doubled. Should you be compelled by stern necessity to resign the pleasure and duty of nourishing your own babe, a wet nurse ought, if possible, to be found, but great care should be taken to choose one whose constitution, as well as present health, is good. Should a wet nurse not be obtained, the milk of an ass is to be preferred to every other species of aliment.

If the ass could be brought to the door five or six times a day, and a sufficient quantity drawn and presented to the babe through a glass bottle, it would suffer much less than most infants who are deprived of the breast. But how many mothers are there to whom neither of these plans is practicable! In this case, cream, diluted with four or five parts of water, will not so easily curdle as milk, and will be more proper, until the babe is a few weeks old; after this, oatmeal or biscuit gruel may be made with equal proportions of new milk and water; as the babe increases in strength and age, its food may be gradually made more substantial. In whatever form milk is given to a babe, it should always be through a bottle. Glass is preferable to earthenware, as you immediately perceive whether it be quite clean. The neck of the bottle should be covered with a prepared cow's teat; this should be taken off every night and morning, and after being washed in cold water, it should be put for half an hour into a little magnesia and water, which will entirely destroy any acidity that may remain: the bottle too should be occasionally rinsed out with magnesia and water; indeed, it is impossible to use too much caution in keeping every vessel connected with an infant's food *quite sweet.*

Unless you have some one in the nursery on whom you can rely as on yourself, never neglect the personal superintendence of the preparation of your infant's food; with all your care, some variation of sweetness or of warmth can scarcely be avoided, and that variation will always be perceived by your infant, whose delicate stomach and bowels will be deranged by it. Food should not be given too quickly to an infant; when it has taken a little, let it rest a minute or two, and then give it a little more; by this means it will be enabled to expel the wind from its stomach, which would prevent its taking sufficient food to satisfy its hunger.

It is too common for mothers and nurses to attribute the cries of children to the want of food, when they proceed from other causes. Always notice the time of feeding your babe, and if it should cry within an hour or two from that time, rely upon it, hunger is not the cause, that is, if you were careful to feed it properly. Examine whether it be dry and warm, soothe it gently, and rub its feet and legs with your warm hand; if this does not quiet it, examine whether there be any tightness of dress or any pin to annoy it. These means will generally hush its cries, without increasing its troubles by loading its stomach with food which it does not need,

and which it is unable to digest. You must not, however, be distressed at every little cry of your dear babe: for crying is often an effort of nature to exercise the lungs, which certainly require exercise as much as the other organs of the body; it is, too, very frequently the best remedy that can be found for the disorders that cause it. For instance, if an infant be troubled with flatulence, the exertion of crying will remove the wind and give relief; if it be cold, crying will cause a rush of blood to the surface of the body that will restore a warm and healthy action to the skin.

Let me advise you, if you suckle your child, to be very watchful over your own health; if you take cold, or be in any way disordered, your babe must suffer with you. Be careful not to hurry yourself with long walks, or with violent exertion of any kind, as it will heat your milk, and cause it to disagree with the babe. You must be equally guarded as to the state of your mind. If you yield to irritability or fretfulness, or allow yourself to be agitated with anxiety or fear, your child must feel the painful effects. If you feel that you are losing your self-command, retire to your closet, whatever you may neglect for the time, and there seek, by the exercise of reason and the influ-

ence of devotion, that calmness and serenity so conducive to your own happiness, as well as to the comfort of your nursling. I have often found singing to be an excellent remedy for irritability; if the words be sacred and the tune cheerful or plaintive, according to the state of the feelings, peace and harmony generally succeed. Could we, in such circumstances, abstract our thoughts from objects that distress us, and fix them on the cheering truths of the gospel, we should find that our difficulties and trials would speedily vanish.

Again let me earnestly recommend gentle out-door exercise, as essential to the health both of mother and babe. Those mothers who have strength to carry out their own infants, but who cannot command the attendance of a nurse, are most awfully responsible if they neglect this duty from a fear of the world's observation. This remark applies more particularly to towns, where the taking out of children is made sadly too much of a parade; in the country we apprehend no such danger. "In cold seasons the removal of children into the open air should not be precipitated. It is better to be content with habituating them to those variations of temperature which different rooms in the same house will at first supply. They

should not at first be carried into the cooler room, except when they are rather warm, and then only for a short time. The true principle is *gradually* to inure the habit to cold."—*Carpenter*. "Till hardness has been acquired, and perhaps even after, sudden variations of temperature can scarcely fail to be attended with injurious effects on the bodily system. This is the chief cause of colds and catarrh. The inflammatory species of catarrh are not simply owing to cold, but arise from the concurrent or successive action of cold and heat, or of stimuli equivalent to heat."—*Dr. Beddoes*.

The clothing of infants must depend on various circumstances, such as their state of health, the season of the year, and the hardihood or delicacy of the mother. It must be such as to keep them warm, without oppressing them with heat. A thin cambric or lace cap will, after the first month, be a sufficient covering for the head, except when exposed to currents or changes of air, which is sometimes unavoidable in going from one room to another.

The feet of infants must be kept warm, or pain in the bowels will be the consequence; woollen socks should be worn as soon as the little creature begins to be moved about, particularly when its clothes are shortened. I

cannot too strongly recommend the use of a flannel napkin over the diaper for very young babes, when they are carried out. The chest, too, should be guarded with flannel, especially if there be any constitutional or hereditary predisposition to inflammation.

Neither child nor mother should ever sit in a current of air; and the more effectually to guard against this evil, as large and as airy a room as possible should be chosen for the nursery. "Small nurseries cause many complaints and many bad constitutions."—*Carpenter.* Care should be taken that the room be not too warm; about 55° or 60° will be quite sufficient.

The exercise of infants should at first be very gentle, on account of their extreme susceptibility to cold. As they grow stronger and become more hardened, a greater degree of exercise may be used with advantage, as it will assist in preserving the internal heat of the body, which is a much better preservative from chill than the application of external heat. By the time a child is ten or twelve weeks old, it will do him much good to exercise the extremities. Teach him to clap his little hands, and to spring upon his feet while you support his weight.

The more an infant is allowed to nurse itself

the better, provided it be not left alone or in any respect neglected. It is quite consonant with reason to suppose that a babe can be more at ease on a bed or soft mattress than on the knee of the nurse. While in the arms, if it wish to stretch out its little limbs or turn its head, it is not at liberty; its movements must be regulated by the will of the nurse, who is necessarily ignorant of the babe's feelings and desires. If the mother or nurse sit near the infant while it is lying at its ease, she will immediately perceive by its restlessness when it needs attention; and its wants should be immediately supplied.

As the babe grows older and requires to be talked to, it may be laid in a cradle or basket near the nurse, who may amuse it, when needful, quite as well as if she had it on her lap.

There are few nurses who are not obliged to attend to some little matters besides the babe, and it cannot be very agreeable to the little thing to be tucked under the arm and carried across the room to suit the convenience of the nurse on every trifling occasion.

When the strength and activity of the infant increase, it may be laid on a sofa to exercise its limbs; after its dress is shortened, and it has become less susceptible to cold, it may be allow-

ed to roll freely on the carpet; to this valuable kind of exercise, I attribute, in a great degree, the robust and healthy frames of my own children; indeed, there is no method by which a child can so fully exercise all its limbs as this, nor can any more effectual means be adopted of preventing weakness and deformity of the spine. It is too a great relief to the mother or nurse, who, though she cannot leave her charge may usefully employ her hands while the child is safely nursing itself. Before a babe is laid on the carpet, it should be carefully examined, lest pins, needles, or any thing that could hurt it, or which would be improper for it to put into its mouth, should be lying about. Accidents have sometimes occurred from want of care in this respect.

You may rest assured that a child nursed in the way recommended above, will sooner possess the use of its powers both of body and mind than the nursling who is constantly in the arms, and who feels entirely dependant upon others for every movement.

By the time the infant is three or four months old, he should have little things put into his hands, in order that he may cultivate the sense of feeling. As he will instinctively carry whatever is given him to his mouth, nothing that is

painted should be allowed. A ring of Indian rubber is perhaps the best thing that can be given, as it will yield to the pressure of the gums, and assist dentition. A smooth soft crust of bread is nice for that purpose, but it requires care, lest crumbs or larger pieces should get into the throat. A few large bone buttons, or empty cotton spools, firmly attached to a strong tape, are toys that will prove at once safe and attractive.

You must remember that children are soon weary of any amusement, however eagerly they may have desired it: you will, therefore, do well to watch the first symptoms of fatigue or fretfulness they may evince, and change their toy or their position. This will prevent their crying so frequently, and thereby forming a very distressing and injurious habit. Children who know by experience that their wants will be attended to without crying, will use a variety of little efforts to attract attention before they will have recourse to it.

An infant will often be fretful without your being able to discover the cause, but doubtless he has some uncomfortable feelings that distress him. A change of room, if he cannot be taken out of doors, or sometimes a change of nurse, will relieve him; above all, a cheerful,

encouraging smile on the nurse's countenance will be indispensable. I never knew any one scolded or frowned into a good humour. A valuable writer on Christian education observes, "I may be pronounced fanciful, but I certainly think it would be of importance to keep sour and ill-humoured faces out of the nursery, even though such faces were not commonly accompanied by corresponding conduct. I am persuaded that I have seen a very bad effect produced by a face of this kind on the countenance and mind of an infant. Is it not reasonable to suppose, that if an infant sympathizes with a smile it may also sympathize with a scowl, and catch somewhat of the inward disposition which distorts the features of the nurse?"—*Babington.* If an infant will thus reflect the feelings by which it is regarded, how great must be the advantage of personal maternal care. In whose countenance can there beam so much benignity and kindness as in that of a tender and affectionate mother? Another simple method of soothing a babe is to sponge the hands and face with cold water, and gently to wipe them. Brushing the hair, too, if children have no dislike to it, tends to quiet them. Let those who doubt the efficacy of these means try them on themselves when they are fatigued and anxious

Gently tossing an infant in the arms, and slightly tickling it, may be tried, but it should never be thrown into convulsive fits of laughter, nor should it be tossed violently.

Newly-born infants, if in good health, sleep almost constantly. When they can take a little notice of surrounding objects, they will keep awake two or three hours at once, but they must be allowed to sleep as much as they please during the day, in addition to undisturbed repose in the night: to the latter, indeed, infants cannot be too soon accustomed; and if free from illness and pain, they should not, after they are two months old, have the breast more than once during the night; even that indulgence should be denied by the time they are six or seven months old. So much depends on habit in this respect, as in most others, that young mothers cannot be too careful as to their conduct from the first. It will require much self-command to deny the dear babe what you know it so much desires; but as both your own health and that of the babe will be benefited by the exertion, you ought to be firm. After your infant is weaned, it ought not to drink in the night if it can possibly be got to sleep without. To prevent this frequent cause of disturbance, until it is twelve months old a draught of warm milk

may be given at the time the mother retires to rest.

Unless the weather be very severe, it is much better for an infant to sleep in a little cot by the bedside than in its mother's arms, as it is in danger of being overheated by the warmth of her body; she may also be annoyed by the fear of overlaying it. Great care, however, should be taken to keep it thoroughly warm, by enveloping it in soft blankets, as infants have less power of generating heat than adults. An infant should always be laid on its side, and, while unable to turn itself over, the side should be regularly changed, to prevent it from growing crooked. The head should be supported by a moderately soft pillow, and carefully screened from all currents of air. If mothers will begin early to accustom an infant to go to bed awake, much trouble and distress will be prevented. At first it is necessary to sit by the side of the cradle, and to rock it very gently, and, if the babe be restless, to sing to it; but this should not be continued long. It will soon be merely needful to sit in the room, and, if the babe do not soon settle, gently to hush it, taking care to have the light shaded. The next step will be to withdraw the light altogether, but for some one to remain in the room

to prevent the babe being frightened, should it not fall asleep immediately. By these means, when it is twelve months old, it may be put to bed awake without any difficulty.

Most children require an hour or two of sleep in the middle of the day, till they are two or three years old, and they may generally be allowed to give up the habit when they please; their own feelings will be a safe guide.

A strong temptation is sometimes felt to administer carminatives, anodynes, and opiates, for the purpose of producing quietness, and of relieving the mother or nurse. I must enter my protest against them, except when ordered by a regular practitioner. If we find that much present peace and comfort have been obtained by the administration of quack medicines, we may be induced to repeat them till the constitution is seriously impaired. "Sleep being an operation of nature, cannot be obtained by art without producing the most injurious consequences."—*Struve.*

Toward the fourth or fifth month, sometimes earlier, dentition will commence. The first symptom is generally the dribbling from the infant's mouth, which will often continue a long time before the teeth appear. Care should be

taken at such a period to keep it dry about the chest, which will be best done by letting it wear a bib made of double linen, which ought to be frequently changed. This is a trying season for mothers, as the fretfulness of the babe makes nursing very difficult. *The more it can be in the fresh air, if weather permit, the more easily it will cut its teeth.* Great care must, however, be taken to protect its eyes from the strong light of the sun, "which, during this period of pain, tends powerfully to the increase of that cerebral irritation, which, if it do not already exist, is but too apt to occur." At times it will be very irritable, feverish, and restless, and it will get no sound sleep. The cry of an infant when teething is very peculiar, and is easily recognised by an experienced ear. If it drops asleep on the knee, it will start and moan. During this period of restlessness, great relief may be afforded by bathing the legs and feet in tepid water every night.

"While teething, many children will take food whenever it is offered, till they become so completely gorged that they can eat no longer, and they then lie dull, heavy, and stupified, moaning and starting at intervals, but never thoroughly roused up unless sickness should supervene, and the contents of the stomach

should be rejected. Of course this practice of giving food under the circumstances alluded to is decidedly to be condemned. If, when a child exhibits these symptoms, the gums are well lanced, the restlessness in general disappears instantly, and he will sink into a calm sleep, from which in a few hours he will wake, refreshed and in health."—*Darwall.* So strong is the prejudice of many mothers against the lancing of the gums, that they will allow their children to be convulsed before they will yield to it; they shrink from the infliction of momentary pain, and they fancy that should the gums heal over the teeth after they have been lanced, they will become harder than they were at first, and consequently that the teeth will have more difficulty in protruding. Most of the medical practitioners with whom I have conversed on the subject, deny that the gums are hardened by lancing. "There is no fact better ascertained than that parts newly formed are most easily removed by absorption, the process which is employed by nature whenever any portion of the body wastes away. So far, then, from the teeth penetrating with greater difficulty after lancing, the very contrary is the case; the healed part will be more easily absorbed, and the teeth will more readily pro-

trude."—*Darwall.* I am aware that there are some practitioners of great talent who are very sparing of the lancet in such cases, but it is with the prejudices of mothers that we have now to contend, and from my own experience I can give lancing the strongest recommendation.

With the first infant there is more danger of attempting to teach too much than too little, for the mother is often anxious to make her darling into a little prodigy. An infant of six months old may be taught the names of many objects connected with its happiness; and it will be well to point to its food, for instance, and to repeat the name frequently, so that when it is impatient for its appearance, the promise of it by name may tend to produce quietness. Teach it to point to persons and objects when you repeat the name of them; this will practise its sight, as well as accustom it to the habit of observation. Pieces of unpainted wood may be given to it, which will produce the same effect. It is interesting to watch the knowing looks and grave countenance of an infant while examining any new object; the sight, the feeling, the taste, and, for aught we know, the reasoning powers are all at work; never disturb a child thus occupied; it is exercising the power of attention.

I agree with Miss Edgeworth in thinking that in early childhood obedience is a habit rather than a virtue, and I would be understood to speak of it now merely as a habit. An infant will naturally seize hold of any thing that attracts its notice, and it must be taught to yield up what would be injurious—even an infant must learn obedience. In order to facilitate the acquisition, never allow any thing to be taken from it without immediately supplying its place with some other attractive object; but as prevention is better than cure, you must avoid placing within its reach any thing that it ought not to have. When obliged to compel it to resign any thing, a kind, yet determined expression of countenance, a gentle, yet firm tone of voice, should be used; it is not well to resort to coaxing. I would never thwart an infant unnecessarily, but when it must be opposed, it should be done effectually; when upward of six months old, it ought never to come off victorious —its obstinacy will be strengthened by conquest. Try to make compliance with your wishes pleasant to its feelings, by often telling it to do what you know will give pleasure; as much as possible, avoid commanding what is disagreeable, and gently lead and *assist* it to obey.

To facilitate the power of speech, it is as well to repeat simple syllables ending with a vowel, as ma-ma, pa-pa, ta-ta, to which definite meanings may be attached, and utterly banish from the nursery that unintelligible and nonsensical jargon with which infants are so often stunned.

Cleanliness is so essential to the health and comfort of children, that I should not be excusable were I to omit the mention of it. Young infants should not be washed in cold water, but they may be gradually inured to its application by the time they are four or five months old.

"The most important point in washing an infant is, to take care that the seams—those lines where the skin is reflected on another surface—as, between the fingers, backs of the ears, arm-pits, doubling of the joints, &c., are made clean. It is in these situations we find troublesome and even dangerous excoriations, and when they happen, it is almost always from want of cleanliness. It is not the mere general daily washing with soap and water that will suffice, nor plunging the infant into the bath; each crease of the skin must be carefully sponged, and in those parts peculiarly exposed to the contact of excrementitious matters, the

sponge and warm water are to be used every time the diaper is changed."—*Roberton.* Most of these highly judicious remarks are applicable to children till they are two or three years old, by which time the skin is stronger and better able to bear friction, but at no age is want of strict cleanliness allowable. I do not mean that a child should be *always* clean; this, if allowed the free exercise of its limbs, is impossible; but once a day it should be well washed. After the first six months, it is a convenient practice to wash children at night. They should be washed thoroughly clean with cold water and white soap, applied by means of a sponge or piece of flannel, and when wiped, well rubbed, especially on the spine and joints, with the warm hand, or with a flesh-brush, taking great care that the feet are quite warm before they are put to bed. Washing at night tends to keep the night-clothes and bed-linen clean, and saves time and inconvenience in the morning. When an infant first rises, it may not be possible at times to wash it immediately, and thus it is either entirely neglected, or it is in danger of taking cold from waiting undressed.

Where a morning bath is used, there is of course no need to do more in the evening than to wash those parts of the body that are dirty,

It is deeply to be regretted that so few families possess a nursery bath; it is attended with difficulties, we allow, but in many cases those difficulties are not insuperable.*

We must take into consideration not only the physical, but the moral influence of cleanliness. Among the poor, especially, it is generally found a correct test; the most indolent and vicious are the least cleanly. If parents were aware how much the mental as well as the physical vigour of the adult depend upon the ablutions of the child, they would be less sparing of expense and trouble than they too frequently are, in obtaining for them the free use and application of what is so freely bestowed on man, CLEAN WATER.

A regular change of linen, night and morning, is calculated to keep the pores of the skin open, and contributes to strengthen the system. An infant, after the first few weeks, during which the change might fatigue it too much, should never be allowed to sleep in any part of the dress which it wears in the day. As soon as its habits are so formed that it does not need to wear flannel under the night-gown, it should be discarded: calico is decidedly preferable if the babe be in health. If an infant sleep alone

* See Appendix, No. 2.

and is inclined to toss off the clothes, it should wear a long flannel gown over the calico one, especially if the weather be severe. This will preserve the infant from cold, and the mother from that watchful anxiety which so often disturbs her repose.

Let me advise you never to *urge* an infant to use its feet; if it be healthy, it will soon evince its desire for the exercise, by trying to slip off the nurse's knee. At first it must be supported, and not be allowed to feel its own weight; as it grows stronger, it may support itself, but should always be taken up when it gives indications of fatigue. Many mothers are very anxious that their children should run early, that is, by nine or ten months old; but until an infant is a year old, it is seldom, perhaps never, strong enough to walk, or wise enough to take the least care of itself; by getting it to walk too early, a nurse's care and fatigue are greatly increased, without the infant being benefited; indeed, deformity of the feet and other serious evils frequently result from this highly injudicious practice. I can make no excuse for idle nurses, who, to save themselves the trouble of stooping, will tie a riband round the infant's waist to hold it by, or who will support it by its dress behind during its first attempts at walk-

ing; either method produces so much compression of the chest as to be very injurious to the health. Holding it by the armpits is not advisable; it tends to give an undue elevation of the shoulders. The best plan is, to place a hand on each side of the waist, and thus to guide its tottering steps. When it is able to walk by holding one hand, you should change the hand regularly, or the muscles of one arm, by being more used, will become stronger than those of the other. Should the child slip, and you be unable to save it except by retaining hold of its arm, let it fall gently to the ground; a gentle, or even a heavy fall, may be far less hurtful than the twisting of the arm, by which a joint may be dislocated. When your infant can walk, it should be allowed to exercise itself freely, but must be carefully guarded against accidents, which might make it timid and doubtful of its own powers.

It is now exposed to one great danger—FIRE. It is truly distressing to read the numerous instances which the public prints record of children destroyed by fire. The best preservative is a moveable wire guard, which can be fixed to the grate of any room in which children are allowed to play. No confidence ought to be felt from their being left with older children, for this

is seldom any security. Another precaution is, to make children's pinafores closed behind; for we generally hear of the pinafore having taken fire: stuff frocks, in winter, cannot be too strongly recommended, on this account. If a child have an irrepressible inclination to play with fire, he ought to be made to feel its power; let the finger be once pressed on the hot bar, so as to raise a small blister, and he will not be likely to repeat his dangerous amusement. It will cost some sacrifice of parental feeling to do this; but it will cost more to see your darling wrapped in flames. But, notwithstanding every precaution, a child's clothes may take fire; and should such an alarm be given, its life will probably depend on your presence of mind. The flames must be instantly smothered with something that will not easily ignite. The hearth-rug, a piece of carpet or blanket, or, if these be not at hand, a large cloth plunged in water, will quickly extinguish the flames. Should you be present when the fire is perceived, you may smother it with your own dress; but great caution should be used, as it would sadly increase the confusion and alarm, and lessen the chances of the child's escape, were your clothes to be set on fire.

While constant, self-denying watchfulness is

the imperative duty of the mother, she must not trust to this alone: she must commit her offspring to the care of Him who never sleepeth; whose hand is ever ready to protect the helpless; and whose power alone can preserve them from the innumerable dangers by which they are hourly surrounded.

CHAPTER IV.

MISCELLANEOUS OBSERVATIONS ON THE TRAINING OF CHILDREN FROM TWENTY MONTHS OLD.

In my last chapter I accompanied my nursery protegé from his birth to his eighteenth or twentieth month, when a mother naturally expects to be in some measure relieved from the fatigue of nursing. Perhaps another little one is expected, and you feel unable to exert yourself, as you have formerly done, for the gratification of your child; or you may already have clasped a second treasure to your bosom, and feel the constant activity of your first to be trying to your strength your nerves, and your temper. In nursery phraseology, "the little creature is always in mischief." Be thankful that he is inclined to be in what is called mischief.

A mother, who had a numerous family, in the bringing up of which she had little help, and, of course, much fatigue, had one girl, however, who was very quiet and good; she seldom cried, and would lie still and doze whenever her mother wanted to be at liberty. The poor child caused scarcely any trouble, but she grew up decidedly imbecile in mind, and quite unable to earn her own livelihood. To use the mother's own words, she "never wished for another quiet child." A healthy child, especially if he possess tolerable intellectual powers, will be constantly occupied with something, and if you do not find him employment he will find it for himself. The best plan is, to keep articles that must not be touched out of his reach as much as possible, and to provide him with playthings that he cannot injure. Never give him any thing for his own that he can pull in pieces—unless, indeed, you make up your mind to allow him to do with it what he pleases; it either sours the child's temper to be continually thwarted, or it tries your own to see valuable things destroyed. Children should have but few playthings, and those should be strong and useful. A box of wooden bricks, a wooden hammer, a set of nine-pins, and a soft ball, are all good in-door playthings for a young child.

If he can have a little garden, a small wooden spade, rake, barrow, cart, and a hoop, will afford ample variety for out-door amusement. If a little girl be one of the party, a doll and a skipping-rope may be added, and you will have a complete juvenile equipment. But I must add to the list a number of pieces of unpainted wood, square, oblong, triangular, round, and circular. Teach him to pile them up, and then knock them down; the noise will produce a merry laugh, and not only amuse the older one, but the babe also, who will soon begin to notice the little face that always greets him with a smile of affection.

I have often been delighted to see the ingenuity of children in finding themselves employment. Put them into a room ever so neatly arranged, and how soon will they litter it all over! This does not proceed from any dislike to neatness, but from a want of something to do. If you will say, "Come and help me to put things straight," there will be as much exertion as you could desire to help you; and you will be well repaid for the self-command that enabled you to forbear scolding, by seeing the animated countenance of your child while tugging at a load almost as big as himself. Endeavour to impress upon your mind that he is

not mischievous, but active, and that you ought to rejoice, rather than to repine, at those proofs of his activity which so much annoy you; and thus you will be enabled to smile away many a gathering frown, and to suppress many a deep-drawn sigh.

When a child is weary of one employment or amusement, set him something else to do. Ask him to carry his playthings to a certain chair or table, or to bring you a book, a buffet, or any thing he can carry, whether you want it or not. When he has done any thing for you, say, "There is a useful little boy," or "girl;" or apply the epithet to his name, as "useful Thomas." You will be surprised what delight a child evinces in being called useful; he will try to find something useful to do—perhaps seriously to your annoyance, but still he must be praised for the motive; and you must endeavour to inform his judgment as to those acts that are useful, and those that are troublesome. I have known an active child kept still during the whole time his baby sister was washed and dressed, by being requested to help his mother. He has held the soap-box, or rubbed his little sister's feet and hands, or reached each article of dress off the chair on which they were arranged—much to his own and his mother's de-

light. These may seem trifling observations, *but they have an important bearing on the happiness of the child.* A mother, unaccustomed to observation and self-government, might be induced to scold or to strike her little one, when he teazed her, and thus increase her own troubles, and make him fretful and unhappy.

You must not let the babe, should you have one, so entirely occupy your attention as to cause the older child to feel himself neglected, which he is very apt to do when he remains unnoticed for a length of time. There is a danger of his becoming jealous of the infant, and of his thus imbibing a dislike to one whom he ought to love with tenderness. Some nurses are so foolish—we might almost say, wicked—as to strive to implant jealous feelings in the mind of the older child, by telling him that "mama loves baby now;" that "baby is mama's darling," or, that he "must not trouble mama, she is engaged with baby." A mother should assiduously endeavour to prevent the existence of those feelings which this abominable conduct has a tendency to excite. Let your child see that he is still the object of your affection, and that you are still anxious to promote his happiness. When you can, for a few moments, take him on your lap, and press his little head against

that bosom from which he was so lately nourished, tell him how dearly you still love him, and that it is because poor little baby cannot do any thing for itself that it is so much nursed; say, that when baby is older it will play on the floor with him, and love him very dearly. Little ways like these will prevent a child feeling depressed or angry on seeing another occupy that attention which was so lately all his own. Above all, when he lisps his infant prayer, teach him to implore the blessing of God on his little brother or sister.

Until children have cut all their teeth, and even after, they frequently feel poorly, without being able to describe their feelings. You may, by constant observation, detect many of the symptoms of infantile disease; but children have many bodily and mental trials which they cannot explain to any one. The flushed cheek is not always a symptom of anger, nor the tearful eye the result of fretfulness; nor is the sullen look always an expression of obstinacy, nor the lagging walk a sign of idleness. These things, therefore, must not be disregarded. A mother's tender caress is generally a sufficient preventive of a serious fit of naughtiness, which would require correction; and as it is most desirable to prevent the formation of a habit of

fretting, it is worth while for a mother to leave any engagement that is not imperative, to ward off the approaching storm.

The plan which some nurses and mothers adopt, of working on the feelings of children, is seriously to be deprecated, as alike injurious and impolitic. Children who are treated with proper kindness are sure to feel a great affection for their parents and nurses, and to evince a real sympathy with their joys and sorrows. Even an infant will crow and smile with delight, if it witness a more than ordinary degree of pleasing animation in the mother's countenance. And what mother has not felt the soothing power of infant sympathy, when her child has raised the corner of its little pinafore to wipe the tear-drops from its mother's cheek? Is it not, then, unjust, unkind, needlessly to work upon these feelings, either for the purpose of displaying your power, or of commanding the child's obedience? I have seen a nurse cover her face and pretend to weep, when an infant has refused to quit its mother in order to come to her; and the poor babe, thinking her in great trouble, has sobbed with grief, and held out its little arms to comfort her. I have seen another turn away in feigned anger, and offer to leave the babe, till its cries have brought her

back; this has been done, partly to gain the nurse's object with the child, and partly to exhibit its affection for her. These are too strong stimulants to apply to the feelings of children, and are sure to produce a reaction: the little sufferers will soon become alike indifferent to grief and displeasure. Besides, they will soon discover the duplicity which has been practised upon them, and like every other species of falsehood, it will cause the practisers to be disbelieved, even when they speak or act the truth.

But working on the affections is a small evil, compared with that of working on the fears of children. I have before condemned the plan of speaking to infants in a loud or angry tone, which may silence and subdue them, but it is the silence and subjugation of fear. Ill-informed and thoughtless nurses will often work most seriously on the imaginations of children, in order to obtain their obedience. They threaten to put them in the cellar, or in the closet, or to call the old man or the sweep to fetch them, or, most commonly, to put them in the dark. A child so worked upon has been known to scream with terror, if led to a door opening into a dark passage, even when accompanied by his mother, who was gently endeavouring to dispel his alarm. When she took him in her arms,

and with a candle showed him that there was nothing to hurt him, he seemed a little reassured, but clung to her with convulsive energy when she took him into the passage without a candle.

The passion of fear seems to be implanted in the human mind for the purpose of self-preservation, and a child devoid of fear would be exposed to innumerable evils, from ignorance of the nature and properties of the objects with which he is surrounded. "But a foolish nurse no sooner observes that the infant mind is susceptible of terror, than she applies the discovery to the worst of purposes. It is the first, the constant engine of tyranny; and in proportion as it is made to operate, the mind will be enfeebled and debased. In one of the woes denounced against a sinful people in Scripture, it is declared by the prophet, *that they shall be afraid where no fear is.* I can scarcely form an idea of a greater calamity; and yet to this calamity is many an innocent being exposed by the injudicious treatment of the nursery."—*Miss Hamilton's Letters on Education.*

CHAPTER V.

ON THE DRESS, SLEEP, AND FOOD OF YOUNG CHILDREN.

In addition to the directions given on the physical training of children in chapter iii, I would advise you to let them have the free use of their limbs, by dressing them in clothes which fit them comfortably, but which do not press with any degree of tightness on any part of their bodies. Let the clothing be sufficiently warm to suit the state of the weather and the constitution of the child, but do not oppress him with too great a load. Let the shoes be comfortably large, or deformity and coldness of the feet, and awkward habits of walking, will be the consequence. A child's feet, when it first walks, grow so fast, that if shoes fit exactly when bought, they cannot be worn more than a month with safety. It is best to buy them rather too large, and always to have two pairs in wear at once, to prevent the necessity of drying them too quickly. With respect to the use of socks, I scarcely know what to advise, you must be guided by the constitution of the child, and your own circumstances and taste.

My children have never worn socks, except while very young, when carried out, and their feet are generally warm; they wear boots in winter, lined with flannel, and having a cork sole inside. It certainly saves much trouble for them to go without socks, and where they are accustomed to it from infancy it is a safe practice.

On the use of flannel or of cotton next the skin, the opinion of Mr. Davis, in his "Popular Manual," is so entirely accordant with my own views, that I transcribe it. He observes, that "the applications of cotton clothing are almost universal. It is the kind of cloth that should be worn next the skin in almost all climes, at all seasons, and by all ages and sexes. For children, in whom the functions of the skin are particularly active, cotton cloth is the only suitable tissue that can be worn in immediate contact with it; almost the same might be said of the adult age; but in the latter periods of life, flannel is mostly a great comfort. In the use of *woollen inner* garments, Hygienists have been far too indiscriminate in their recommendations. But as one of the chief advantages of a flannel shirt consists in the stimulation its roughness is capable of imparting to the skin—a quality so potent, that, by resorting to it, we may be able

to avert some serious malady—it is clear that it cannot be the part of wisdom unnecessarily and indiscriminately to apply flannel to the tender cutaneous surface, and thus, by habitual contact, to rob this surface of its sensibility to the asperities of a woollen garment. Indeed, it is most probable that the heightened sensibility to cold acquired by the too indiscriminate use of flannel, is a chief source of the attacks of rheumatism, catarrh, and other maladies that are so prevalent among us. Instead, therefore, of allowing a flannel shirt where there is no particular need for one, but merely as a matter of course, especially to children, who very rarely indeed require such a powerful stimulant to be applied to their sensitive skins, it would be much better to throw an additional woollen garment over the shoulders, to be worn for a time, and put off when the cold is passed, or we enter the house again."

There is one great evil in the dress of children, especially girls, against which you must be particularly guarded; I mean, those enemies of female elegance, comfort, and health, modern stays. The prejudice in favour of them is so strong, even for girls of three and four years old, that I cannot hope to make much impression by *my feeble* efforts; I shall therefore make some

extracts from the able work of Mr. Davis, which will be found in the Appendix.* A lady, whose oldest daughter is now ten years of age, and who, though delicate, is perfectly upright and easy in her carriage, tells me that she has never allowed her girls to wear bone nor any stiffening in their stays. Loose stays, made of double jean, which button up behind, with the shoulder-straps and the straps to which the button-holes are attached made of elastic cloth, are the only allowable supports to the female figure; and even these are not necessary until a girl is upward of six years old. Until that time, the binding commonly worn on children's petticoats is quite sufficient. But it will be of little use to make children go without stays, if the bands of their frocks are to be so tight round the waist as to render breathing a difficulty, and romping an impossibility, without producing a rent in the garment.

With respect to drawers for girls, I have some hesitation in advising, as I have not yet tried them. Custom seems to speak in their favour, for mothers in nearly all classes of society countenance the use of them. They certainly look very neat and delicate for young girls, and allow their petticoats to be so short as

* See Appendix, No. 3.

not to incommode them in taking exercise. If worn, they should be as wide and airy as petticoats, except about the legs, and should be frequently changed. Though the tight-buttoned clothes of boys are now out of fashion, we cannot be sure how long they will continue to be so; and I would just observe, that several medical writers, whose opinions I have read on the subject, strongly affirm that they are both physically and morally injurious. The trousers of young boys should be made as wide as the drawers of girls, and be suspended from the shoulders by a binding; a loose frock should be worn over them.

One most effectual method of promoting the health of children, is to allow them a sufficiency of "nature's sweet restorer, balmy sleep." Till they are six or seven years old, they require from ten to twelve hours' sleep, particularly if they have ample out-door exercise; as they grow older the quantity may be gradually diminished. Children ought to rise early, say by six in summer, and by seven or half-past seven in winter; consequently they ought to go to bed, when young, by six o'clock; when they require less sleep, they may sit up a little longer.

It is not desirable, in general, to wake them out of their sleep, as there is more injury to be

apprehended from their sleeping too little than too much; but if it should at any time be needful, it ought to be done very gently and affectionately. If children sleep soundly they generally awake at the proper time in good humour, and will often rouse their parents from slumber by their cheerful prattle, or simple song. To secure sound sleep for them, it is necessary that their beds be not too soft; a hair or chaff mattress is certainly the best: "the head should be so far raised by the bolster as to be on a level with the spine, so as to preserve a free circulation in the blood-vessels going to and from the head." They should not be overloaded with clothing; but during the first three or four winters of their lives they need the warmth which can only be obtained by sleeping in blankets, especially if they sleep alone, and in most cases it is desirable that they should do so.

Till a child is able to get out of bed himself, he should sleep in a room with some one whose watchfulness can be depended upon, or he may form very bad habits.

Children should always be not only permitted, but encouraged, to rise as soon as they awake; indeed, when they are old enough to rise without help, they should, if needful, be stimulated by reward to get up as soon as they awake.

Such a habit, formed in childhood, and persevered in, may avert much physical and moral injury. To this end, care should be taken that every needful comfort be provided for them by the time they rise; if they have not to wait to be dressed, or to shiver for want of fire, and if they be not restricted in their play for fear of rousing the adults of the family, they will not wish to lie in bed when they have had sufficient sleep. I do not know a more delightful sound to a mother's ears, than the joyous laughter of her little ones in the early morning; it speaks of health and happiness, and of that freedom from care which only childhood can enjoy. If children be fretful in a morning, we may be sure either that they are poorly, or that their wants are not properly attended to.

By making their morning hours pleasant to them, you render the habit of early rising easy of acquisition; and, when we consider the effect which such a habit will have on their physical, their intellectual, and their moral powers through life, we cannot too strenuously exert ourselves in assisting them to establish it. The impressions first made on the mind in the morning generally continue through the day, and give a colour to every event which occurs. It is, therefore, of great importance that children

should be spoken to with kindness and cheerfulness when they first awake; and if mothers cannot themselves attend to them, they ought to impress on the minds of nurses how much trouble they may save themselves, and how much happiness they may impart to their young charge, by getting them into a cheerful, happy temper, as soon as they arise.

Another means of promoting the health of children is, to attend carefully to the state of their bowels. While teething it is desirable that they should have a motion morning and evening: after this period every morning immediately after breakfast will be sufficient, if they be in good health. If you accustom a child to go to his chair regularly at the times specified, and if he be made to understand that the proper evacuation of his bowels is essential to his health, he will make no opposition to your wishes, but will in a short time voluntarily attend to what he must be taught to consider a positive duty.

If you find that your child is not regular, or is too much confined in his bowels, endeavour to correct the evil by diet. I have generally found a little molasses and bread for supper, or early in the morning, a sufficient corrective in common cases. A fig or two in the forenoon

is a good remedy, so is oatmeal porridge, if children will take it, or a little ginger-bread made principally of fine oatmeal and molasses. Should attention to diet be found insufficient, I would urge the adoption of the following advice given by a medical friend, who observes, that "in those cases where the operations of nature are defective, instead, under ordinary circumstances, of dosing the child with medicine, it is much beter to use as an injection, by means of a syringe which will contain about four table-spoonfuls of fluid, or rather more if requisite, senna tea, or simple gruel with the addition of a tea-spoonful of salt: this will usually be sufficient to accomplish the required end." Another simple and often efficient remedy is gentle friction, with the warm hand, on the region of the stomach and bowels.

Should there be irritation of the bowels, and your child's motions be too frequent or unnatural, you must let his diet be as unstimulating as possible. You may, in such cases, safely allow fine wheat bread and boiled milk, rice milk, arrow-root and milk, plain batter pudding, or white broth with pearl barley boiled in it. Animal food, fruit, and stimulating drinks, must be avoided. If, however, the irritation continue *more* than two or three days, on no account

hesitate to seek medical advice: a child's health may be most seriously injured by a few days' neglect.

Children ought not to breakfast till they have been up an hour or an hour and a half, but if they wish for it, a little bread may be given them to eat before the regular meal.

Milk seems to be their natural food, and ought in general to constitute their principal aliment till dentition is considerably advanced. And so long as it agrees with them, it ought always to form a principal part of their breakfast. If given fresh from the cow, it ought to be diluted with one-third water; if allowed to stand for the purpose of obtaining the cream, it should stand only for one meal, that is, from night till morning; when skimmed it will require no water, but a little salt should be added. When the weather is cold it is best to heat the milk till it nearly boils, then pour it on the bread and let it stand till cool enough to eat. Much care should be taken that it is kept out of reach while hot, as most serious accidents have arisen from children, when hungry, having upset the boiling milk and scalded themselves. When the weather is warm, children often wish for cold milk for breakfast, but it should never be given without being at least

new milk warm, and the bread should then be toasted and put into it. I have been struck with the following observation in Mr. Davis's Popular Manual, and venture to transcribe it for the benefit of those to whom the work may not be accessible :—"It is hardly necessary to give a caution against taking milk in a *cold state;* still, as I know accidents are continually occurring from inattention to this circumstance, some of which are of a most alarming character, such as dreadful convulsions in children, it may prevent some pain and some sorrow to attract notice to the subject. The bland, unstimulant qualities of this fluid, its great specific density, its high power of conducting heat, and its solicitation of a copious supply of gastric juice and of vital energy for its digestion, all tend to confirm this view of the danger of drinking any quantity of cold milk."

If children breakfast by eight o'clock and do not dine till one or two, they will need something to eat about eleven. A little bread and butter, or bread and molasses, and a draught of water, may with propriety be given till they are five or six years old, and then a piece of bread will be sufficient to prevent exhaustion, which is all that is required. Where the parents dine on plain wholesome food, there is

little difficulty in regulating the diet of the children. They may, when able to masticate, have a little animal food cut small, with potatoes and gravy; this, with some plain pudding, will furnish an abundant and agreeable repast. Good broths are a valuable aliment for children, but should never supersede the use of solid food. Till they are of an age to know that your affection and truthfulness can be fully relied on, it is better to keep forbidden dainties out of their sight, as they cannot understand you when you assert that what you eat with impunity will be injurious to *them*. If you have any dishes at your own table of which they must not partake, they had better have an earlier and separate dinner; but as a mother's watchful eye seems indispensable at a dinner table, not only to regulate the quantity of food taken, but to attend to the manner of eating it, you will find it needful to preside in person, if you have no one to supply your place in whom you can repose implicit confidence. So much shame and difficulty are experienced where children form bad and vulgar habits of eating, that it is worth while to make some sacrifice of ease while they are young, in order to accustom them to behave properly at table; there will then be no inconvenience should a stranger have to dine with them.

Pure water, or toast and water, is the only proper beverage for children; and if the parents take either ale or wine, they should, on no account, suffer their children even to *taste*. "A few drops cannot injure the dear child," says the indulgent father; but a few drops to the tender and susceptible stomach of a child are equal to a few glasses to the adult. Besides, it leads to a bad habit, for if children be allowed to *taste* frequently, they will soon *like* it, and will often be found draining the glasses left on the dinner table, or sipping freely when it is within their reach. If a child become fond of fermented drinks, it is hardly possible to prevent his becoming a drunkard in after life. Let me most earnestly entreat, most solemnly warn you, to prevent this fatal habit—the temporal, the eternal welfare of your child depends upon it. I would rather never taste either wine or ale again, than that my children should have to plead my example as an excuse for taking them. It will not be needful, surely, to protest against spirituous liquors being given to children; and yet the medical men whose works I have consulted lay much stress on the subject, as they say it is a very common practice among the poor and uneducated.*

* See Appendix, No. 4.

If children take a long walk, or any fatiguing exercise, before dinner, they should return in time to rest for twenty or thirty minutes before they begin to eat. Dr. Combe says, that "exercise *immediately before meals*, unless of a gentle description, is injurious, and an interval of rest ought always to intervene."*

Some mothers have the impression that butter and sugar are unwholesome, and forbid the use of them in the nursery; but it is generally admitted by medical practitioners, that, taken in moderation, they are highly nutritive. Dr. Darwin, in his Zoonomia, says, that "the custom of some people, in restraining children entirely from butter and sugar, is depriving them of a very wholesome, agreeable, and substantial part of their diet."

I cannot too strongly press upon the attention of mothers the absolute necessity of permitting and even urging children to use a sufficiency of salt to their food. Several medical practitioners of eminence have assured me, that when children eat freely of salt, there is no danger of their being troubled with worms. It may of course be taken to excess, so as to produce irritation of the bowels, but this may be guarded against by limiting its use to meal times.

* See Appendix, No. 5.

Fruit should only be given to children in moderation, and then it should be quite ripe, but it is best when made into preserves or baked. "Of imported fruits, the most agreeable we receive, and that which excites the most beneficial influence on the digestive organs, is the orange. As the kernels of different nuts are taken with us, they are exceedingly indigestible, and even dangerous. Cases of the most violent convulsions have occurred to me, in children, from partaking of them. Salt is a condiment that should never be omitted with them."—*Davis.*

When children retire to rest by six or seven in the evening, they will need nothing after tea, which should be taken about an hour before they are put to bed. Milk and water, with a little sugar, and as much bread and butter as they wish for, seems most suited to their tastes; at least my children seemed to tire of bread and milk by the time they were two years old, and we were obliged to change it, or they would have gone supperless to bed. Good wheat flour produces the most agreeable and the most nutritive kind of food, but it should *never* be eaten new. Home-made bread is decidedly the most wholesome, as the alum used by bakers, though very small in quantity, is injurious to delicate stomachs.

To conclude, though children should not be allowed food, except it be bread, whenever they wish for it, they must not be too much restricted as to the quantity of plain food they take, as nature will easily remove a superabundance, but cannot supply a deficiency.

CHAPTER VI.

ON PHYSICAL AND INTELLECTUAL EXERCISE.

It cannot be too deeply impressed on the minds of mothers, that in order effectually to preserve the health, and to promote the full development of the body, of the senses, and of the mind, the exercise of them all must be equalized as much as possible. For instance, by exclusively exercising the body we may produce a healthy, robust frame, but the perceptive faculties will be blunted by neglect, and the mental powers rendered sluggish and inefficient. Should we on the contrary devote our attention solely to the cultivation of the senses, we may form an expert mechanic, incurring the risk of a debilitated frame, and very little intellectual energy on subjects unconnected with his peculiar art. On the evils of over exerting

the intellectual, to the neglect of the physical powers, I shall have to dwell more fully in another chapter.

Those who are accustomed to see only tolerably well-trained children, without observing minutely the various means by which their powers of body and of mind are cultivated, will think it scarcely possible that a child who freely uses his limbs can suffer much injury from not having his senses and his mind exercised; but could they be brought into immediate contact with the neglected children of the poor, especially where infant schools have not exerted their highly beneficial influence, they would be convinced of the necessity of properly training both the mind and the senses. I once undertook the task of teaching a boy of six years old, who had run wild on a farm near to my residence. I was much struck with the difficulty he had in properly using his senses, especially on small objects placed near to him. If he were told to run and drive a dog off the flowerbeds, or to hold a gentleman's horse, he was all alive; but to hold a book or a pencil, or to pick up my thimble, was an absolute task. His eyesight seemed at first defective, for he could not distinguish small objects, such as letters or marks; but he gradually improved, and in a few

months could distinguish any thing. We had the same difficulty with his hearing, for unless I spoke very slowly and distinctly, and but a few easy words at once, he did not seem to hear, because he was not accustomed to listen, except to loud tones. He did not know the names of the different parts of his body, and it was some months before he could be taught the difference between his right and left hand. Yet he turned out a sharp boy, when his senses and his mind had been properly educated.

The best bodily exercise for young children is doubtless running and playing about in the open air, from which they should not be debarred by slight variations of the weather. In large towns, the getting children out of doors, especially so far as to inhale a tolerably pure air, is very difficult; but no sacrifice scarcely should be thought too great to obtain for them this essential requisite for health. Children who are accustomed to go out, if it be but for an hour a day, evidently suffer if deprived of the privilege; they seem dull and poorly, and are often very cross and irritable; in short, out-door exercise is undoubtedly essential, not only to bodily, but to mental health.

The exercise of the senses and of the mental powers may be very advantageously pursued

out of doors, and may greatly conduce to the pleasure both of children and of mothers; and here let me urge upon mothers the desirableness, to say the least, of joining their children in their walks, and striving to enter into all their joyous frolics. While walking, you may exercise a child's sight by desiring him to look at distant objects, and by asking him what he thinks they are like; if he mistake them, approach nearer to them, and let him again try to distinguish them. Or you may examine a pebble or a stone, and inquire its shape, its colour, its weight; try whether it be comparatively soft or hard, and whether he can break or crush it like sand. You may pick up a flower, and tell him the names of the different parts, and of the colours it displays. You may lead him to distinguish between the smell of different flowers, or between that of a hay-field and a bean-field, or of any other object that may be agreeable to the sense. His hearing, too, may be improved by directing his attention to different sounds; as, to the sound of a distant carriage—is it a cart, coach, or a lighter vehicle? The notes of different birds, and the voices of different animals, will also afford ample exercise for his hearing.

While a child is thus employing his senses,

the best powers of his mind will likewise be cultivated. You will teach him observation, without which the brightest page of the book of nature is a mere blank. He will exercise his attention, by examining objects with so much care as to be enabled again to recognise them, particularly if he be accustomed to describe them to his father on his return home. He will be led, by degrees, to a perception of differences between objects and parts of objects: his memory, too, will be cultivated; and he will early imbibe a taste for the cheap and inexhaustible pleasures which nature provides for her children.*

But, in our variable climate, much of our time must be spent within doors, and children must be allowed freely to use their limbs and their lungs, though at the risk of stunning the ears of their nurses. Not that children need be always noisy, but they must sometimes be not only permitted, but encouraged, to romp and laugh. Who that has seen the happy faces, and heard the joyous laughter, of a family of young children, during the twilight of a winter's evening, while they enjoyed the delight of a game of romps with their father, would condemn them with stoical dignity to uniform drawing-

* See Appendix, No. 6.

room deportment? Let them have the range of the passages, and of the rooms without fires, while they run and jump about till they are warm; encourage them to clap their hands and sing some simple rhyme, or to jump over some soft article laid on the floor.

By some this advice may be thought superfluous, and by others it may be deemed trifling; but those directions can be neither superfluous nor trifling, the rejection or the adoption of which must very materially affect the health, spirits, and temper of children. Habituate a child to the stillness and silence of strict decorum, and he will be indolent and stupid; always prohibit vigorous exertions of the limbs and voice, and he will soon evince the folly of such prohibitions by distressing manifestations of bodily and mental weakness. On the contrary, let him act as a child; let him jump, and run, and laugh, and shout, and sing, even within doors, and his muscular and nervous systems will be strengthened, his spirits will be exhilarated, cheerfulness of temper will be promoted, and he will be the better prepared for meeting the difficulties of life with a manly courage. If parents were fully aware how very favourably the delightful and active playfulness of their *children* may influence their future habits and

character, they would the more readily put up with the inconvenience resulting from it, nor would they so frequently utter the stern command, "Give over, children; that noise is unbearable."

The senses may be exercised within doors in a manner similar to that recommended while walking. Where there are several children in a family, this kind of exercise forms a nice winter evening's amusement. You may bid them close their eyes, and try to distinguish, by the touch and the smell, a piece of linen from cotton, silk, or woollen, a silver from a brass thimble, a penny from a half crown, a sovereign from a shilling, a piece of India-rubber from a piece of leather, &c. To exercise the hearing, they may be sent out of the room by turns, and desired to distinguish the voices of those who speak within. One of them may shut his eyes, and try to tell what one of his companions is doing by the sound. These little exercises may be increased in difficulty as the children become more expert. At first some one may brush the table, or walk across the room, or do any thing that can readily be discovered, so as to make the guess not difficult; after a little practice, more delicate sounds will be easily distinguished. If the children be musical, and

there be a piano in the room, they will soon learn to distinguish different notes and chords; in short, an active and ingenious mother will have no difficulty in finding abundant employment for the senses of children at an early age; my aim is principally to call her attention to the importance of the subject. It was not until I was revising this work for the second edition that I met with an excellent little book entitled, "Exercise for the Improvement of the Senses, for young children," published by the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge. I would strongly recommend this cheap but invaluable publication to the attention of mothers.

But, while thus endeavouring to improve the senses, we must not neglect to cultivate the mind; taking care, however, never to *force* the intellect. Children are naturally inquisitive and curious, and need no stimulus to urge them to seek knowledge; one great difficulty is to know how to answer questions, so as to convey some useful information to the child without perplexing him. A child who has full confidence in his parents' truthfulness, and in their willingness to make him happy, will be quite satisfied when he is told that he cannot understand a subject now, but shall have it explained to him *when* he is older. But his inquiries should not

be too frequently repressed; he should rather be encouraged to ask what different things are called, and of what they are made. Till mothers make the attempt they cannot conceive how much knowledge they may agreeably impart to their children without fatiguing themselves, or wearying their little hearers. The common furniture of a room will afford ample sources of interest to the young inquirer. What is the table made of? is a query that may lead to very useful conversation: but there is so much danger of telling a child more than he can understand at once, and consequently more than he can remember, that, at the risk of being thought tedious, I shall give a specimen of such conversation, to illustrate my meaning.

C. Mamma, what is this table made of?

M. Of wood.

C. But it is not like the pieces of wood you gave me to play with;—and what is wood? and what is ——?

M. Stop, my dear, one question at once. Do you remember seeing those large trees at the side of the road when we walked out yesterday?

C. Yes, mamma.

M. And was not one of them cut down, and lying at the side of the foot-path?

C. O yes, and you told me the men were going to make wood of it; but how would they do it?

M. They will saw it into thin pieces, or planks, in the same way that you observed the men sawing stone last week; and then the joiner will cut them into whatever shape and size he pleases.

C. I should like to see them saw wood, and make tables; when will you take me, mamma?

M. As soon as I can, love; but now go and fetch one of your pieces of wood.

C. Here it is; see, it is different from the table.

M. Yes; but this table is like that chair, is it not?

C. It is, mamma.

M. Now, run and look if your piece of wood is not like the bed-room floor.

C. It is, mamma; I suppose this table is painted?

M. No; the table and the floor are different kinds of wood; but you cannot understand that now. Run and play.

C. I will, mamma; but just tell me what trees are made of.

M. They grow out of the ground, from very little ones, as you will grow to a tall man, like

your father. Can you tell me who makes the trees to grow?

C. The great God, mamma; you told me he makes every thing.

Now, though a child of four years old might understand an explanation similar to this, a younger one would be better answered by simply telling him that the table was made of wood. We must constantly bear in mind that children know little or nothing, and that they can receive very little knowledge at a time; this will encourage us to attempt to teach them, however humble an opinion we may have of our own powers, and will prevent our overdoing them with information, from a proper appreciation of theirs.

I cannot too strongly recommend "Lessons on Objects," by Dr. Mayo, of Cheam; it will afford very valuable hints to mothers on the best means of conveying information to the infant mind, and by the time her children reach six or seven years of age she would find it an invaluable assistant. Before that age children can learn but very little from books, but from objects they may learn much. "The exclusive use of book education, as a means of conveying instruction, is manifestly unnatural, as well as inefficient. If allowed to handle and ex-

amine a new object, a child will pursue the investigation with pleasure, and in five minutes will acquire a more correct knowledge than by a whole hour's reading about its qualities, without seeing it. In the one instance, its perceptive powers are stimulated by the direct presence of those qualities of which they are destined to take cognizance; while in the other they are roused only by the imperfect medium of artificial language, and the child has to *create* the object in his own mind, before he can take notice of its qualities."—*Dr. Combe's Physiology.*

Let a mother, for instance, explain by degrees the names of the different parts of her scissors or her penknife, being careful to use the correct terms, and to make her child use them, and she will find that she has not only imparted much useful knowledge, but has increased her child's capacity for obtaining more.

And here let me impress upon the minds of mothers, that one of the highest objects of infantile instruction is so to cultivate and strengthen the powers, both of body and of mind, as to render the child fully capable of acquiring useful knowledge when he is of an age to value the acquisition. How many persons have to lament through life, that no pains were taken *in* their childhood to train them up to habits of

order, of observation, of discrimination, and of reasoning! The facts that may be impressed on the memories of children are of far less importance than the cultivation of those powers of mind, by the use of which they may in after years be enabled to impress on their memories whatever they please. The strong conviction that I have on my mind of the force of habit, and of the consequent necessity of beginning early to form the infant mind, is the reason of my restricting my observations, in this little work, to the training of children under six or seven years of age.

But it must not be forgotten, that *repetition* is the only means by which habits can be formed, and you must therefore see that every day the body, the senses, and the mind, are judiciously exercised. "The necessity of judicious *repetition*, in mental and moral education, is in fact too little adverted to, because the principle on which it is effectual is not understood. To induce facility of action in the organs of the mind, *practice* is as essential as it is in the organs of motion. The idea or feeling must not only be communicated, but it must be reproduced and represented, in different forms, till all the faculties concerned in understanding it come to work efficiently together in the

conception of it, and until a sufficient impression be made on the organ of mind for the latter to retain it. The organic laws teach us that we are presumptuous in expecting the formation of a habit from a single act, and that we must reproduce the associated activity of the requisite faculties many times before the result will certainly follow: just as we must repeat the movement in skaiting many times before we become master of it."—*Dr. Combe's Physiology.*

CHAPTER VII.

INTELLECTUAL TRAINING.

THE mental constitutions of children differ so much, that to attempt to lay down an invariable rule for the intellectual training of all would be as absurd as it would be useless. General principles may, however, be inculcated, by which mothers may be guided in their choice of the best time, and in the adoption of the best means, of teaching the essential art of reading.

I have before observed, that the first child is in danger either of being overtaught or of being too early taught; and it is only by observation and experience that a mother can correctly form her views on the subject. My first boy could read little words, and syllables of two letters, when he was two years old; thanks to the arrival of another child, he was preserved from the serious evil that might have been the result of my over anxiety for his progress; and before I had again leisure to pay him much attention, my desire for his intellectual culture was restrained by the acquisition of more correct views of the physiology both of the body

and of the mind. These views have been in some measure developed in the preceding pages, where I have spoken at some length on the necessity of equalizing the exercise of the bodily and mental powers, and of the moral propensities. It is generally admitted that the brain is the organ of the mind, and if the mind be too much exercised, especially in young children, the brain will be disproportionably developed, the bodily powers weakened, and the health undermined. Dr. A. Combe says, that "at any time of life excessive and continued mental exertion is hurtful; but in infancy and early youth, when the structure of the brain is still immature and delicate, permanent mischief is more easily inflicted by injudicious treatment than at any subsequent period; and in this respect the analogy is complete between the brain and the other parts of the body, as we have already seen exemplified in the injurious effects of premature exercise of the bones and muscles. Scrofulous and rickety children are the most usual sufferers in this way; they are generally remarkable for large heads, great precocity of understanding, and small, delicate bones. But, in such instances, the great size of the brain and the acuteness of mind are the result of *morbid* growth; and even with the best manage-

ment the child passes the first years of its life constantly on the brink of active disease."

Dr. Brigham, an American writer, states, that he has "seen several affecting and melancholy instances of children, five or six years of age, lingering awhile with diseases from which those less gifted readily recover, and at last dying notwithstanding the utmost efforts to restore them. During their sickness they constantly manifested a passion for books and mental excitement, and were admired for the maturity of their minds. The chance for the recovery of such precocious children is, in my opinion, small, when attacked by disease." With these statements before us, who would wish to be the mother of an infant prodigy?* Generally speaking, I think a child may with propriety begin to learn to read at three or three and a half years of age; but not more than four or five minutes once or twice a day ought at first to be devoted to the exercise. The object is not to teach him to read in as short a space of time as possible, but to make reading a source of pleasure, and thus to render it, what in reality it is, a key to knowledge.

Still I would not have you to teach reading as a mere amusement: during the few minutes

* See Appendix, No. 7.

that you give to the employment, endeavour to fix your child's attention, and make him understand that whenever he is learning to read he must be *very attentive*. When a child sees his parents and others reading, and observes that they are interested and pleased with what they read, he will probably express his wish to learn, and you might embrace that opportunity of telling him, that if he would be attentive you would take the trouble to teach him; children easily learn what they wish to learn, and if you can incite the desire, your labour is nearly over.

Endeavour to choose the best time for giving a lesson. When your child is fatigued, or hungry, or fretful, it would be very injudicious to call him to read; it would be equally so if he were deeply interested in play or in any other pursuits. If you call him when he seems to want employment, he will most likely come very gladly and you will find him a very attentive pupil: only let him stop before he is weary. These precautions may be gradually less observed as your child becomes more interested in the success of his efforts, for he must learn to give a voluntary attention to his studies, or he will make little proficiency. In short, though it may not be advisable to strew his path to

knowledge with flowers, it will be well to remove the pebbles that might obstruct it.

In Miss Edgworth's excellent chapter on reading, she lays down a plan by which she says several of her father's children were taught to read with ease and pleasure in a few months. Had this plan been easily practicable, there is reason to think that it would, by this time, been more generally adopted: with intelligent children who are not taught to read too early, I think it would succeed; but as many mothers would be alarmed at the apparent difficulty of the scheme, I shall venture to propose one which I have found to answer exceedingly well, and which is quite simple and easy.

You must have observed that the *names* of the consonants are generally very different from their *sounds*, and sometimes quite dissimilar; as, the pronunciation of the letter h, and its simple aspiration. It is not, therefore, advisable that children should at first learn the names of the consonants. In the earliest lessons of children few capitals are used, and there can be no propriety in teaching them before the small letters. Your first object should be, to make your child familiar with the names and long sounds of the vowels. This may be done by pasting the small letters a, e, i, o, u, which you may

cut out of a handbill, upon pieces of card, and making him thoroughly acquainted with their names and sounds. You may then prepare, in the same way, the simple vowels with the consonant b prefixed to each, as ba, be, bi, bo, bu: thus the child will become familiar with the sound of b, without the difficulty which knowing that it was called b would cause; for if you had first taught him that the sound he is now to prefix to the vowels is called b, he would naturally, when about to combine them, be led to say, bea, bee, bei, beo, beu, and you would have to compel him to unlearn, or to lay aside his knowledge of the name of the letter, before you could teach him its proper sound in combination with other letters. You may thus make him acquainted with most of the sounds of the consonants prefixed to the vowels; but you must give him only the hard sounds of c and g, as it would be too difficult a lesson for a beginner to distinguish between the hard and the soft sounds. If you give him ca, co, cu, ga, go, gu, at first, it will be sufficient. Q, as it can only be used with u after it, as qua, &c., had better be omitted in the first lesson.

When a child is familiar with these syllables, it will be pleasing to him if you point out the little words that they contain, as do, go,

he, lo, me, no, so, to, me, and show him them. Nothing enables a child to exert himself more than to convince him that he is making progress; when he feels sure that he has learned something, he will more readily and cheerfully apply himself again.

The next step will be, to teach him that when the vowels come *before* the consonants, they have a shorter sound than when they *follow* them, as ab, eb, ib, ob, ub. Here again point out the words formed, as, if, of, am, an, up, &c. By the time he is familiar with the short sound of the vowels, he will most likely know the names of the consonants, as well as their sounds, as children generally ask what they are called; and though I would advise you not to teach the names before you let him learn their sounds, in combination with the vowels, I would not have you conceal them. You may now let the child proceed with the lessons in "Murray's First Book," taking care to teach him to spell the little words without book, which may be done without fatiguing him, by your telling him one or two a day, when you see him inclined to learn.

By occupying his attention but for a few minutes at a time, regularly once or twice a day, he will learn to read without the disagreeable

tone which children who are kept too long at their lessons are apt to acquire. He will be preserved too from those awkward gestures and contortions of countenance, which are to be observed in children who are wearied with attending to what does not interest them; and, above all, he will soon begin to feel that pleasure in his lesson which will induce him almost to teach himself.

"Murray's First Book for Children," of which I cannot speak too highly, may be followed by "Murray's Spelling Book;" and in these I would recommend you to give your child his regular daily lessons; but by the time he can read fluently in the first book, he should be allowed to read, as an indulgence and amusement, that excellent little book, "The Child's First Tales,' by the Rev. Wm. Carus Wilson. This may be followed by Miss Edgworth's "Early Lessons." I never yet met with a child, and many mothers have expressed the same opinion, who was not delighted with the history of Little Frank, contained in these interesting volumes. Works on natural history soon become interesting to intelligent children, who early evince a desire to become acquainted with the forms and habits of animals. "The Natural History of *Birds* and of Quadrupeds," by Francis Schoberl,

with illustrations by Landseer, will be a nice introduction to the subject.*

Well-written voyages and travels are highly instructive, if the little stay-at-home traveller have the different routes and places pointed out to him on the map or globe. The volumes of the "Juvenile Cyclopædia," containing "Remarkable Voyages and Travels," may safely be put into the hands of children.

If you can early give your child a taste for such works as these, you may preserve him from that sickly appetite for tales, the novels of children, which is so highly detrimental to all improvement. I have seen a child of seven or eight years old devour these little tales with as much avidity, and, alas! with as much mental injury, as the young lady of sixteen or seventeen would devour the novels of a circulating library. No wonder that lessons are a task, and school an abhorrence, to such children.

If tales be placed in the hands of children, care should be taken to select such as are true to nature, and the moral of which is evidently good. I see no advantage that can be derived

* Few of the books here mentioned have been republished in this country; but works of a similar character may easily be procured.—AM. ED.

from letting judiciously trained children read accounts of naughty ones, who committed faults of which the reader has never before heard. Such tales set their young imaginations to work, and often create a desire to practise the tricks of which they read.

Young children are generally pleased with simple poetry, such as "Rhymes for the Nursery," by Jane and Ann Taylor, which convey many useful lessons in a truly pleasing form. "Sketches of Natural History," by Mary Howitt, is a treasure which no child can possess without valuing. Mrs. Howitt is a mother, and she knows well how to suit the capacity and interest the feelings of children.

It would be impossible for me, in the narrow limits which I have prescribed for myself, to give a complete list of the best books for young children. I can only warn you to be very careful to select such as are calculated to inform the understanding, to refine the taste, and to improve the heart of your child.

Arithmetic is so important a branch of education to both boys and girls, that they cannot be instructed in the study of it at too early an age. It requires that abstraction of thought so essential to the successful pursuit of knowledge, and so useful in correcting the natural levity of

the youthful mind, that it cannot be neglected without producing a serious defect of the mental character. It requires that kind of exertion which is calculated to form habits of close observation, of reasoning, of comparing, and of calculating causes and effects.

When I said the study of arithmetic could not be commenced too early, I did not mean that young children should be taught figures, which are only the signs of numbers, nor that they should be compelled to add, subtract, multiply, and divide, by the aid of these signs; but that simple numbers and their powers should be early impressed upon their minds.

You may tell a child of two or three years old, that he has two hands, and by frequent repetition he may be taught to answer the question, "How many hands have you?" by saying, "Two, mamma;" but he will not comprehend the difference between one and two, much less that one and one make two. But, *wait with patience*, even if he be your first treasure; in a few months, when his observation is enlarged, he will easily learn the difference between one and two apples, or any thing in which his self-love is interested, and it will be well to ascertain that he really knows this difference before you trouble him with any other number.

By degrees he may learn to count five, and to know that he has five fingers on each hand, and to count five pieces of wood; but till you have tried, you cannot conceive the difficulty you will have in making him understand the power of these numbers. Take one piece of wood away and ask how many are left,—he cannot tell. Ask him to count the four remaining pieces, one, two, three, four, and then add the fifth. It will require repeated lessons on many different days, before he will learn that if one be taken from five there will remain four. The same difficulty will arise in adding one to four as in subtracting it, and you must be sure that he thoroughly understands the effects of removing or adding one, before you proceed to show him the effects of removing two pieces of wood from five.

When you have made your little pupil understand the principle of adding and subtracting, you may exercise his memory, by asking him to add and subtract low numbers without the use of objects to assist him.

He will by this time, most probably, have learned the names of the figures, and may be taught that they are signs of numbers. To effect this, you may let him count the first nine pages of a book, and show him that the figures

at the top correspond to the number of pages he has counted.

A fresh difficulty has now to be encountered, and it is well the little pupil cannot foresee all he has to meet with! He must be taught that the situation of a figure increases or diminishes its value; that a 1 with a cipher after it, is no longer a poor solitary individual, but ten—as many as all the fingers on both his hands. He must next learn, that 1 before 1, 2, 3, &c., stands for ten, to which the figure that follows it must be added, as 12, which means ten and two, 13, ten and three, &c. When he can understand the powers of figures as far as 20, his difficulties will begin to diminish. He will easily learn that 2 before a unit means two tens, or twenty; three before the unit, three tens, or thirty, up to ninety-nine, when you must teach him that 1, followed by two ciphers or figures, is one hundred, and that the figures which follow the one bear the same name as if they were not preceded by the hundred. But it would be tedious to enter further into details. If a mother will thus render numbers and the signs of numbers familiar to her child, she will find, that when placed under the tuition of a professor, nominally to commence the study of arithmetic, he will make rapid progress. The

teacher will take much credit to himself, and bestow much praise upon his attentive pupil; but the grateful child will remember that it is to the plain and familiar explanations of his affectionate mother, given with a patience and perseverance which none but a mother could have exercised, that he has been enabled to pursue, with facility and pleasure, what is generally thought a difficult and abstruse study. Mothers may derive great assistance in this department from "Arithmetic for Young Children."

The multiplication table, which is an exercise for the memory as well as for the understanding, should be learned at an early age. If you let your pupil repeat a line after you every day, until he is able to learn it from a book or slate, and take care to cross-question him on each line as it is learned, he may commit the whole table perfectly to memory between the fifth and seventh year of his age. If this lesson be deferred too long, it will be very difficult to learn.

By the time children are five or six years of age, they will begin to imitate the forms of printed letters, and to make little words. This wish to make letters should not be unobserved; and you may turn it to good account, by show-

ing the difference between written and printed letters. If your child evince a desire to learn to write properly, tell him that it will require a great deal of care and attention on his part before he can write well, but that if he will attend exactly to your directions, you will teach him.

This sort of engagement, entered into between you and your pupil, will secure his attention, and lead him to consider instruction in a new branch of education as a favour rather than a task; and this will greatly facilitate his acquisition of knowledge. A slate ruled for large hand with a nail, so as to prevent the lines being rubbed out, a long well-pointed pencil, and a damp sponge, will be all that is needful for a first equipment. Then show your pupil a well-written or engraved copy of the alphabet, and point out to him that a straight oblique line forms a part of the letters *h*, *k*, and *p*, tell him that he must try to make this part of the letters first, and then you will teach him something else. You may guide his hand for two or three strokes, and then encourage him to make a few by himself. This lesson should not exceed four or five minutes, or the child's hand will be cramped, and his attention wearied. You may gradually lengthen his lessons, but always bear in mind yourself, and impress upon the mind

of your pupil, that one line well written will improve him more than a whole page carelessly done.

When he can make a tolerably firm stroke, show him that in the letters *t* and *l* the stroke is carried round at the bottom, and teach him to do the same. When this is accomplished, he will be delighted to find that he can make two letters out of the twenty-six.

He may next practise shorter strokes, with a turn at the top, so as to form an *r* and a part of *m*. When this difficulty is conquered, the turn at top and bottom must be tried, and he will soon find that he can make nearly all the letters, by properly uniting these various strokes and turns. Let him acquire considerable ease in forming these letters before he tries to make the *o*; when that is accomplished, he will easily form *a*, and the other letters of which it is a part, as well as *c* and *e*, to which it is similar. The *x*, the *s*, and the *z*, ought to be reserved till he has been allowed to form a few easy words, as *nun*, *man*, &c.; when he will undertake them with fresh courage.

By adopting a plan similar to this, your little pupil will find that learning to write is not so formidable a task as some have thought it; but *learning* to write well and fluently will require

that care on his part, and that circumspection on the part of the teacher, which it is not my province now to dwell upon.

Geography is generally very interesting to children, if they be not compelled to learn long lessons from books, without any reference either to maps or the globe.

The first geographical information a child receives should be that connected with the estate on which he resides, or the town in which he lives, which will be easily done if there be a map of the town. He will be pleased to see the street where his father's house stands, and the place of worship he attends, distinctly marked, and will soon learn to trace the way from one part of the town to another. You may then show him the north of the town on the map, and place him in a situation where his face is turned to the north, and he will readily learn, that when he stands so, his back is toward the south, his right toward the east, and his left toward the west. You may also lead him to observe in what part of the horizon the sun is first seen in the morning; and tell him that is the east. At noon show him how much its situation is altered, and tell him it then appears to the south of us; and in the evening show him that it is setting in the west.

It would not be well to confuse the ideas of a young child, by telling him that the sun, which he sees change its relative position, stands still; and that the earth, which he never feels to move, is always moving.

When you have made your little pupil understand that a map is a picture of some place, you may show him that the streets or squares on the map are very much smaller than they are in reality, and thus prepare his mind for comprehending a map of the county in which he resides. There you can point out the different towns and places he may have visited or heard of, and let him tell you which of them lies to the north, south, east, or west of the place where you reside. If there be a river contiguous to the town, or in the vicinity, which he has seen, the course of the river on the map will interest him.

A joining map of England and Wales, or of Scotland, or Ireland,* may next be presented to the young student, and explained in a similar manner, and by these means he will soon become familiar with the elements of geography, and capable of making great proficiency in the science, with ease and pleasure.

I have now pointed out what I conceive to

* A map of the United States.—Am. Ed.

be a simple and efficient mode of initiating children into the most important branches of intellectual education—reading, arithmetic, writing, and geography.

I should have liked to say something on English grammar, and of the method which I have often found successful in teaching it; but I find that to make the subject intelligible to the generality of mothers, a treatise, rather than a chapter, would be required.

So far nothing has been said of the assistance a mother may require in the training of her children, nor does it enter into the plan of this work to point out the comparative advantages of a school and a home education. If a mother be unable, from any cause, to have her children constantly under her own superintendence, it is her imperative duty to provide means for their receiving that watchful care from others which she is unable to bestow. A well-educated nursery governess, who will enter into a mother's views and adopt her plans, will advantageously supply her place for a few hours at a time; but a mother should not leave the management of the children entirely to the governess; she should be regarded by all parties concerned as the assistant, rather than the substitute, of the mother.

If no services be required from a young person so situated but what she sees a mother is willing to assist in when needful, she will not feel herself degraded to the rank of a menial by performing them; and the children will be in a great measure prevented from that association with servants which is frequently so injurious to their morals.

Let me not, on this subject, be misunderstood: it is to the neglect of early training among the children of the poor that the depravity of servants, so much complained of, is solely to be attributed, not to any necessary connection between their vices and their station. It is to be hoped that the influence of infant schools on the morals of the poor will be felt with gratifying force in the improved conduct of the servants of the rising generation. I am aware that there are many pleasing exceptions to the description of servants above alluded to, but, as a general rule, they are not proper companions for young children.

Those who cannot obtain the assistance of a governess would do well to avail themselves of the advantages which a well-conducted infant school will afford. In some towns there are infant schools for children of the middle classes of society, and where these do not at present

exist, it is to be hoped that parents will exert themselves to have them established.* I must here recommend to the attention of mothers a work entitled "Moral Training," by Mr. Stow, one of the directors of the Model Infant School, Glasgow. Whether they wish to improve their own plans of home education, or to form an infant school in their own neighbourhood, they would derive great pleasure and assistance from the perusal of this excellent work.

* Daily infant schools are of doubtful utility, except for such children as have neither home nor mother.—AM. ED.

CHAPTER VIII.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS.

As French, music, drawing, and dancing are generally spoken of as accomplishments, and as the last cannot possibly be called an intellectual occupation, I must devote a short chapter to the consideration of them.

Those parents who wish their children to study any other language than their own will find it best to begin, when a child is five or six years old, to tell him, in the foreign tongue, the names of those objects with which he is most familiar. As mothers are generally more conversant with French than with any other foreign language, they will more easily teach the rudiments of it to their children. I am often asked by a child, little more than four years old, "What is French for glass, mamma?" or any other object that attracts his attention. When I tell him, I make him repeat the word till he pronounces it correctly, and there we let the lesson end. He is too young to have his memory burdened with French words; but by pronouncing them correctly he is acquiring a habit which will greatly assist him when he begins

to study the language. You may teach little phrases in the same manner, but you must be assured that your own accent is good, or you may injure rather than improve your pupil.

Parents who are themselves musical will most likely find that their children are similarly gifted. It is almost superfluous to say, that music should be practised as an art before it can be studied as a science.

We must again call to mind the effect of repetition in forming habits, and nothing less than continued repetition can enable a child to perform with ease on any instrument. As the piano is generally the ladies' instrument, a mother first turns her child's attention to it, and watches with delight the chubby fingers wandering over the keys. The first lessons should be to teach the pupil to hold his hands in a proper position, and to exercise the fingers alternately, especially the third finger, which, from the anatomy of the hand, is much more difficult to move than the others. This is best done by letting the child exercise his fingers on the table for a few minutes at a time, till he can hold his hands properly and move his fingers easily; he may then be put to the piano.

It is not my intention to lay down a plan for teaching music, but merely to show a mother

how she may prepare her children to profit by the lessons of a professor. But, here let me warn mothers against requiring their daughters to learn music when they have no taste for it: boys, in most cases, can please themselves whether they learn this accomplishment or not, but girls are too often *compelled* to spend from one to four hours a day, during eight or ten years of their lives, at the piano.

If you be educating your daughter as a teacher of music, and she be possessed of a musical taste, it is quite right to devote so large a portion of her time to the acquisition of it. If she be learning it merely as an accomplishment, to enliven the domestic circle and to aid the exercises of devotion, she may with propriety devote from one to two hours a day to the study, provided she has a taste for it; if she has not, it is waste time: not that you should decide in a few lessons on her capacity for learning; but to persevere for year after year, to the serious interruption of more important studies, is worse than useless.

Many children early evince a taste for drawing, which it would be well to encourage. Their first efforts to copy the forms of letters, or to make houses, trees, and animals on their *slates*, are often greatly admired and praised by

parents; but in general they are not advised to try to make the tumbling walls of their splendid mansions perpendicular, nor to make the trunks of their trees thicker than the branches, nor to reduce the size of the dog's nose within that of his leg. It requires no knowledge of the rules of perspective, nor skill in the art of drawing, to enable mothers to point out these defects, and to accustom the infant artist to correct them: her superior observation will thus enable her to render a mere childish amusement a source of instruction. The habit of observation, and the power of perceiving minute differences and variations, may be formed in children at an early age, by encouraging this taste for imitating familiar objects. Should they evince a talent for the delightful art, you should afford them whatever facilities you can, as it is one of those quiet fireside amusements which render home doubly attractive. Till they can have the assistance of a teacher, if you be not a proficient in the art, you may obtain at a moderate price very good lithographed drawings for them to copy The transparent slates will be found a source of great amusement and particularly serviceable, by means of the accompanying lithographs, in giving accurate notions of forms. But encourage them as early as possible to draw

from nature; a leaf is easy to sketch, and the child should be able to sketch a considerable variety before he attempts a flower. Drawing may also be made subservient to the study of geography. If the little pupil has a dissected map, he may copy the shapes of the different counties, and even of countries, on his slate, and thus become familiar with their forms and extent.

Dancing is an art, the acquisition of which by young children is so highly gratifying to maternal vanity, that I am not surprised that those parents who make no religious profession should allow their children to learn what is generally considered an elegant and even necessary accomplishment. Some of the arguments which I shall adduce on this subject may have an influence even on the fashionable and the gay; but it must be understood that the following observations are more particularly addressed to those mothers who not only *profess*, but really *desire*, to "train up their children in the way in which they should go."

The principal arguments advanced in favour of dancing are, that the exercise contributes to health, gives children a graceful and easy carriage, and that it is an agreeable and innocent amusement for a social party.

To overturn the first argument, my unsupported authority will have little weight. I shall therefore borrow the language of two eminent writers on the preservation of health. Dr. Combe says, "Dancing is a cheerful and useful exercise, but has the disadvantage of being used within doors, in confined air, often in dusty rooms, and at most unseasonable hours. Practised in the open air, and in the day-time, as is common in France, dancing is certainly an invigorating pastime, but in heated rooms, and at late hours, it is the reverse, and often does more harm than good." Mr. Davis writes more at length, and says, "Dancing exercises nearly the same muscles and parts as walking, and, like it, exerts but little influence on the arms and upper portion of the trunk. It is a somewhat violent exercise, and induces a hurried circulation and respiration, besides increasing perspiration much beyond its usual standard. If pursued to excess, and not counteracted by exercises that call into use the upper limbs and upper portion of the trunk, it gives rise to an inordinate development of the lower extremities; and in this manner, in some measure assimilates the male to the female form. To those whose pursuits do not call forth the exercise of the lower limbs, to the sedentary, therefore,

and especially to ladies, dancing affords a very agreeable, exhilarating, and useful exercise. But to ensure this end, it should be pursued in moderation, and not too soon after a repast; and what is still less congenial with the practice of our country, it should not occupy the hours most suited to repose, and should be followed either in the open air, as in continental nations, or in spacious, cool, and well-ventilated apartments, from which particular care is taken to exclude dust." These highly respectable writers have evidently no moral prejudices against dancing, and yet they prove that, practised as it is in England, [and America,] it is decidedly injurious to health. The most common mode of proceeding with children in the middle ranks of society is, for a number to meet together in the school which they attend, to receive the lessons of a master. The first evil is, that they are generally clothed more slightly than usual, particularly about the neck and feet. When heated by the exercise, they sit down to rest, and, if there be no judicious person to check them, choose the coolest part of the room, or have recourse to their fan, should the drinking of cold water be prohibited. Hence the dancing lesson is generally followed by colds, slight or severe, according to the constitutional strength

of the children. But this is not the only evil. The mental excitement which precedes and accompanies the lesson, the want of proper ventilation in the room, and the dust which is unavoidably caused by the exercise, produce in many delicate children headaches and nausea. The frequent rotatory motion which some dances, particularly the waltzes, require, often occasions fainting. I have frequently seen a child supported from the waltz to her seat in a state little short of a swoon. The risks to which those are exposed who have to walk home after the lesson need not be specified. If such be some of the physical evils which attend the learning to dance, in the middle of the day, in a comparatively cool room, without the additional stimulus of spectators, and without any variation from the general diet of children, what must be the consequences of their assembling at an evening party, or "children's ball?" There the room is generally heated with fires and lights; the children are dressed still more slightly than usual; their spirits are excited by having so many spectators to admire and applaud them, and by being allowed so many stimulating drinks. They are generally permitted to sit up two or three hours beyond their usual time of retiring to bed, and when there

they can obtain but little refreshing sleep, in consequence of the over-excitement and over-exertion of the evening. The next morning, how ill are the little votaries of pleasure prepared for attending to their studies, should they even be sufficiently well to leave their beds!

The next argument in favour of dancing is, that it tends to give children a graceful and easy carriage. Were children naturally awkward and stiff in their deportment, there would be considerable power in this argument; for few objects are more displeasing to persons of refined taste than children with formal and artificial manners. One of the most eminent professors of the art, with whom I was at one time acquainted, a man who, if possible, would have dignified his profession, constantly endeavoured to impress upon his pupils that the perfection of gracefulness and ease in the human figure was a young child; and his constant aim was to induce his pupils to lay aside the artificial manners they had acquired, and to acquire the ease and gracefulness they had laid aside—the gracefulness of untutored childhood. If the directions which have been previously given for the clothing and exercise of children be observed, and if mothers prevent them from associating with rude and vulgar play-fellows, they

need entertain no fears of their acquiring awkward manners. But another suggestion must be permitted. Parents and teachers seldom hesitate to allow the use of their largest room for their children to learn to dance in; could they not allow the same room for them to exercise in when they cannot be out of doors? They go to considerable expense in obtaining assistance to teach dancing; might they not with as little expense obtain some one to superintend the gymnastic exercises of their children? Indeed, in many cases, this superintendence might be given by the parents themselves.

I will now mention a few of the games which generally please children, and which are much better calculated to preserve the health and gracefulness of their bodies than dancing. Battledore and shuttle-feather is an admirable game for exercising every muscle in the body, particularly if children are taught to use the left hand as much as the right. In a large room, two or more may play at once, each having a battledore, and sending the same feather from one to the other. An India-rubber ball is equally useful, and so are skipping-ropes, as means of exercise and sources of amusement. But to exercise the whole frame, to expand the chest, and to give ease and gracefulness to every

movement, there is no game equal to that most correctly styled "Les Graces." The hoops and sticks may be obtained at most respectable toy-shops, and the art of playing with them is easily learned. These games may all be played by boys as well as girls, particularly while young

In answer to the third argument, little need now be said. The games above named would afford abundant active amusement for a young party; and children who have a taste for books, drawings, shells, minerals, and flowers, will not require the assistance of dancing to fill up the hours allotted to social intercourse.

Although my observations on this subject have been carried to a greater length than I at first intended, I cannot close this chapter without adverting to the moral injury which results from permitting children to acquire this captivating art. Here I must more especially address those who profess to have the best, the eternal interests of their children at heart.

The *motives* presented to the minds of children in order to stimulate their exertions to learn dancing are, most of them, either directly or partially opposed to the motives held out to them in that course of moral and religious training you have previously pursued. Hitherto you have placed before them, as the strongest

incentives to improvement, a desire to be useful to their fellow-creatures, to please their parents; to obey God, and to prepare for heaven. It is true that you tell them that if they dance well it will please their parents; but you can no longer point to the word of God for confirmation of your reason for being pleased, nor can you assure them that it will please God to see them elegant dancers, much less can you impress on their minds that it will make them more meet for heaven, or more capable of enjoying the intellectual, moral, and spiritual delights of that bright abode.

Hitherto it has been a maxim with you, and you have taught your children to regard it as such, "that whether we eat or drink, or *whatever we do*, we should do all to the glory of God!" But can you tell them that to dance well will promote "the glory of God," either directly or indirectly? It may be objected, that playing at the games mentioned above is not calculated to answer this end any better than dancing. In the games I have recommended, nothing is sought for but exercise and relaxation, which are both essential to the preservation of bodily and mental health; and so far *they do* indirectly promote the glory of Him who formed us. But it is not the *mere act* of dancing

that is so much to be objected to. It is the feelings which it excites, the circumstances by which it is surrounded, and the associations to which it leads, that stamp it with odium. The children are dressed for display, and their vanity is excited by the elegance of their robes and the splendour of their ornaments; or should you endeavour to check their rising vanity, by dressing them more plainly than their companions, you only expose them to ridicule and contempt, which have a decidedly worse effect upon their minds than a more splendid dress would produce. Those who have been accustomed to see children dress for a ball cannot but acknowledge that most of the evil passions of our nature are roused even by the preparation. It is needless to give specimens of the frivolous conversation which precedes and follows the amusement, to say nothing of the bickering, satirical spirit displayed during the dance. How different are such feelings from that charity which "envieth not, vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, and which doth not behave itself unseemly!"*

Children accustomed to the display of the ball-room, or even of the social dance, become discontented with the quiet, unobtrusive plea-

* See Appendix, No. 8.

sures of home, and have a constant hankering after visits and visiters.

But it is not while children are entirely under your own control that the worst effects are to be feared. If you train them up to love the world, with its forms and fashions, and to seek their happiness in worldly amusements, rely upon it that when they are at an age to choose their own acquaintance and their own recreations, the gay party will have more charms than the fire-side circle, and the fashionable entertainments of the world will be far more attractive than either the house of God or the retirement of the closet.

But there are some children who seem to be so amiable that flattery can scarcely make them vain, nor emulation envious, and perhaps you hope that yours will escape the contagion to which you so early expose them. Remember that "the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it?" Be not then so deluded. Why should you run such a risk? If dancing be not essential to health of body, nor to gracefulness and ease of carriage, nor to the social enjoyment of young people, why should children be exposed to the evils with which it is necessarily connected? O, strive to eradicate from your own heart that

worldly spirit which would induce you to hazard the best interests of your children for the gratification of your own vanity.

To conclude, in the words of a Christian minister of the present day—"'Be not conformed to this world,' is a divine precept, which you, as the professed followers of Christ, are bound to obey; it is needless to attempt to prove the obligation you are under to impress this precept on the minds of your children, and to encourage them, by all possible means, to render to it their cheerful and uniform obedience. But by your permitting them to learn the art of dancing, you are directly and obviously conforming them to this world; you are furnishing them with a recommendation and introduction to worldly society; you are giving them a qualification for entering with zest into schemes of worldly pleasure; you are facilitating their compliance with worldly customs; you are giving them a relish for worldly entertainments; and you are, moreover, on your own part, rendering narrower and fainter the line of demarkation which ought ever to separate the world from the church.

"O then, admonish your children to shun the snares of a deceitful and corrupting world—try to give them a distaste for its charms—to render them superior to its fascinations—yea, set

them in hostility to a world which lieth in the arms of the wicked one, and let all your instructions, and all your example, enforce upon them that solemn but affectionate exhortation,—'*Love not the world, nor the things that are in the world; if any man love the world the love of the Father is not in him.*'"

CHAPTER IX.

MORAL VIRTUES.

CHILDREN are apt to form a habit of contradiction, against which you must carefully guard. One of the first words you hear a child utter is "no! no!" which he will sometimes vociferate at the utmost pitch of his voice, when he is required to do any thing, or to have any thing done for him, which he does not like. These are sweet sounds to a young mother's ears, and she scampers after the young tyrant, exclaiming, "You shall," and, loading him with kisses, shows that she is delighted with his prowess. He will soon add to his vocabulary; and "I shall," and "I will," "I sha'nt," and "I wont," resound through the house; and when he is made to feel that he *must* yield, his cries

are long and loud. "He is but a child," says the indulgent mother; true, but he is old enough to destroy both his own comfort and yours, as you will find to your sorrow when the habit is a little strengthened.*

To contradict is in fact to disobey, and the only method I have found to answer in such a case is, to avoid contradicting in return, and when the child says, "I sha'nt," &c., to say with serious composure, "You should not say so, it is naughty; you *must obey*." A second "*I sha'nt*" will probably be the response; but instead of noticing it, steadily lead the child to perform or to submit to the required act; and when he finds that he must *invariably* yield, he will soon cease to contradict.

I have before stated that obedience must, at first, be taught as a habit; but by the time a child can speak and understand simple words, you must begin to inculcate obedience not only as a habit but as a virtue. It cannot be too deeply impressed on your mind, that though God has commanded children to obey, you are to implant the habit of obedience long before they can be morally responsible for their conduct. You must also early teach them that to obey their parents is pleasing to the Lord, and

* See Appendix, No. 9.

that their obedience is not required merely for your gratification, but because "it is right" that they should obey.

Though I would condemn a tyrannical and arbitrary exercise of parental authority, I warn you against always assigning a reason for your commands. If you tell a child to do any thing, and he ask, with a look of unwillingness, "Why, mamma?" quietly say, "Because I told you, my child; it is your duty to obey me, you know." If he *first* fulfil your command, and *then*, not understanding the subject, inquire the reason, you will do well to explain it, unless it be something he ought not to know: in such a case tell the truth, by saying, "I do not wish to tell you now," and turn his attention to something else. If children are not to obey till they know *why*, they will be exposed to much evil. A mother may see an approaching danger which her child sees not, and by his paying unquestioning obedience to her call he may be preserved from it. I knew two little boys who were playing on the edge of a stone quarry, and it seemed to their mother, who perceived them, that another step would precipitate them to the bottom; she dared not trust her own voice, so great was her agitation, but she sent to say she wanted them; and to their habit of prompt

obedience she attributed the saving of their lives.

Had I not witnessed the peace and harmony which implicit, cheerful obedience, produced in the family of a highly valued friend, my attention would not have been roused to the subject so soon as it was. In her family I never but once witnessed the least act of disobedience, and that was immediately followed by a slight, but suitable punishment, inflicted with firmness, and accompanied with expressions of deep regret that the child had been disobedient. As soon as she was sufficiently composed she returned to the room, asked forgiveness, complied with her parent's command, and was restored to favour and to peace. What a different scene must a family thus regulated present, from one where obedience is not *uniformly* required! There the parents are constantly checking, scolding, and punishing, without producing any good effect; while the children are perverse, quarrelsome, and unhappy.

A disobedient child is exposed to much physical injury, for he will eat forbidden things, and do forbidden actions, which may seriously affect his health; and how a disobedient child can have his intellectual powers cultivated, I cannot conceive: unless he please to learn,

what teacher can instruct him? But it is the moral injury to which he is liable that demands your most serious consideration. If he break, if you allow him to break with impunity the first commandment with promise, how can you expect him to conform to any other precept of the divine law? If, while a child, you do not train him to obey his earthly parent, how can you expect that, as a man, he will obey his heavenly Parent? If his naturally rebellious will be not subdued in childhood, it will grow with his growth, and strengthen with his strength. O, if you wish your darling child to be happy in this life, train him to obedience—if you wish him to be happy in the life to come, train him to obedience.

Great care must however be taken not to weaken the child's affection for you, while you cultivate this essential virtue.* If you begin with the infant you will have little difficulty with the child, and consequently no severity will be needed; but *you must always be firm.* It is in what are called trifles that mothers are generally too much inclined to yield, without considering the probable results. A mother ought never to utter an injunction without seeing that it is immediately obeyed. The habit

* See Appendix, No. 10.

of disobedience is strengthened by every unenforced command. How common is it to hear a mother say, "Lay that down, child," and then she goes on with her occupation without again thinking of her order. But the child thinks of it, and he soon learns that he may disobey with impunity nine out of ten of his mother's injunctions, and he almost unconsciously rejoices in the power which he feels he possesses. Alas! how little does the undecided mother think of the trouble and distress she is storing up for herself and her darling! An instance has lately come to my knowledge where instantaneous death was the consequence of an act of disobedience, and that apparently of the most trifling character.

Without the exercise of any undue severity it is however *possible* to carry the principle of passive obedience in children too far. You must not forget that they are endowed with reason and with judgment, which require cultivation as well as the other powers of the mind, and you must look forward to a period when they will have to act without your guidance, and to decide without your advice. It is therefore essential that you should, as early as possible, inform their judgments, and teach them to discriminate between right and wrong. Sup-

pose, for instance, your child had not had access to a garden until he was four or five years of age, and you then removed to a residence where a garden was his only play-ground—would you do right in simply commanding him not to eat unripe fruit or to taste the leaves of any of the plants or flowers? Certainly not. You should endeavour to explain to him that unripe fruit will disagree with him, and that the eating it will most probably be followed by pain; that even should he not feel poorly immediately after eating it, he might still receive injury from doing so; tell him, when he is older he will be able fully to understand the reasons for your prohibition, but that he must now obey you implicitly. You may also inform him that the leaves of some plants and flowers are poisonous, and that, as he does not know how to distinguish those that are proper to eat, he must attend to your directions and take none. By these means you inform the judgment of your child, and give him to see the reasonableness and propriety of your injunctions; he will also be more inclined to yield on those occasions when you may not deem it expedient to explain the motives by which you are actuated.

By thus training your child to habits of ra-

tional and cheerful obedience, you are in no danger of weakening that *moral energy* so essential to success in life. Many parents greatly err in this respect. Some break the will by severity; others enervate and subdue it by persuasive kindness; forgetting that without energy and decision of character the most virtuous habits may easily be destroyed and the best resolutions rendered abortive. A young person without power to direct his own will is, so soon as released from parental control, left to the dominion of his desires and affections, or more frequently, feels himself governed for good or evil by the first powerful mind with which he may associate. How important is it, then, that this principle of self-government, this moral energy on which so much after-good depends, be carefully nurtured in early youth!

I am quite aware that to cultivate that strength of character to which I refer, greatly adds to the difficulties of education, but it forms no insuperable obstacle to its success; it enables the child at an earlier age to assist in his own moral culture, and makes him sooner feel his own responsibility.

I am most anxious to express my sentiments on this point so as to be clearly understood, as misconception on a subject so intimately con-

nected with the future well-being of the young would involve evils of serious magnitude. The necessity of training children to habits of obedience seems to be universally allowed. The propriety of cultivating that energy of character which in after life distinguishes the man of independent mind from him who is the mere creature of circumstances, will be equally admitted. The great difficulty in education is so to combine these two objects that they shall not neutralize nor oppose each other. In this respect, I can assure you that the practice is not so difficult as the theory may appear to be to those who have not previously thought on the subject. Circumstances are occurring every day which an observant mother may improve, for leading her child to exercise his judgment and to follow its dictates in opposition to his own feelings; and every such conquest of the judgment over the feelings strengthens the mind, prepares it for future conflicts, and ensures it still greater victories.

Habits of contradiction and disobedience will lead to habits of denial, or lying. I have heard a child of less than two years old deny that he had done something he knew was forbidden, when I had seen him do it; or, when a third person has been telling me that he had

done something wrong, he would watch my countenance, and, as soon as he saw me look grieved, would exclaim, "I did'nt do it." Now the difficulty in such cases is to discover the dear child's motive. Is it from a habit of contradiction, or from a fear of punishment, or from a desire to deceive, that he denies his fault? It cannot, I think, be from the last; for the child cannot, surely, expect to deceive, when he knows his fault has been witnessed. It is probably, partly from the first, but principally from the second. I think that it is better, at so very early a period, not to charge the child with an untruth, but to treat it as contradiction; to punish the fault as gently as circumstances will allow, and to endeavour to impress upon his mind the naughtiness of denying it.* He should be told that the great God, who made him, and who takes care of him, will be angry if he hears him say he has not done a thing, when he has done it. You should watch his looks when he is exposed to a similar temptation, and if they indicate fear, *help* him to speak the truth, or to refrain from denying it, by saying, "Now, my dear, don't deny it," or, "Tell me just how it is, and mamma wont punish you this time;" if he look reassured, and as if he might be put so far

* See chapter on Punishments and Rewards.

to the test, ask, with an encouraging smile and voice, "Did you do it, love?" If he answer, "Yes," you have accomplished much—you have helped him to overcome a desire to deny the truth. As reason expands, you must still watch and still assist him. It is very desirable *never* to ask a child to criminate himself, especially if you have only his word to rely upon. But should it be necessary to ask him, or should you inadvertently say, "Did you do this?" mark his countenance, and if it manifest the least hesitation, say, "Come to me, love, and I will help you to speak the truth." These words, accompanied with looks of encouragement, will almost invariably secure the child's confidence, and if he be thus assisted for a year or two, a good foundation will be laid for one of the first moral virtues. The unceasing activity of some children is constantly leading them into mishaps, for which some punishment is perhaps necessary; a child should be encouraged to come and tell you, and ask forgiveness, when these mishaps occur unknown to others; the forgiveness thus sought should be immediately granted, and accompanied with expressions of commendation for his having spoken the truth. You need not fear that he will thus acquire an indifference as to committing faults, when he

knows that by acknowledging them he can escape punishment. You may take many opportunities of correcting similar faults, when the child's confession is not requisite, nor his truthfulness hazarded. Should you, however, convict him of a wilful falsehood, and you feel convinced that he knew it to be one, you must not, on any account, flinch from duty—he must be told that it is your duty to prevent him, if possible, from ever telling a lie again, and that he must be whipped. If you punish him without anger, you will not, it is to be hoped, be in danger of using too much severity; this would be very unadvisable, particularly for the first time. When he has ceased crying, and is tolerably composed, take him on your knee, and most solemnly reason with him on the awful nature of his crime—of the hatred that God has to liars—of the punishment with which he has threatened them, particularly of their being banished from his presence in heaven; then lead him to kneel with you at the footstool of mercy, and pray for him that he may be preserved from so great a crime in future; and desire him to ask, in his own simple way, for the forgiveness of his heavenly Father: this should be followed by an entire restoration to your favour, and the subject should not be referred

to again, except at his next evening prayer, when he should be told to pray for grace always to speak the truth.

Children of fertile imaginations are apt to tell long tales, which have little or no foundation in truth, and we are almost tempted to admire and smile at their ingenuity. But this must not be —it is a kind of falsehood which may lead to very serious consequences; one mode of correcting this evil is to question them, so as to lead them to see the absurdity of their representations, and then to reason with them on the wrongfulness of indulging in such habits; and it may be necessary to threaten chastisement if such tales be repeated. But here again I must recommend my favourite system of assisting children to do what is right. When a child who has contracted such a habit begins to repeat any thing he has seen or heard, warn him to consider what he is going to say, and remind him that, though you do not know all the particulars of his tale, his heavenly Father does, and will be displeased at the least wilful deviation from the truth. Another mode is, to desire your child to tell his father some circumstance that may have occurred during your walk, carefully helping him whenever he seems to be going wrong, and dwelling on the necessity of great exactness.

But if parents wish their children to be truthful, they must set them the example. You must allow yourself no license whatever, either in word or action. Whatever you promise a child must be performed; and if you say that certain conduct on his part will be followed by certain deprivations, you must keep your word, however much it may incommode you. If, for instance, you tell a child unconditionally that at a certain hour he shall have an apple, and if, before the time mentioned, he should be very naughty, you must not withhold the apple; you must keep your promise, and adopt some other mode of correcting his fault. A habit of threatening children is highly objectionable, and should be carefully guarded against. I know of no method so likely to prevent it as to bind ourselves to fulfil all our threats. "If you do that I'll whip you," or, "Put that down, or I'll send you out of the room," and similar exclamations, are so often used by some mothers, without being put into execution, that they are scarcely noticed by the children, till the mother's anger is roused, and then she does what she did not intend to do. Strive never to threaten in an angry tone. Calmly to tell a child that if he repeat certain actions you shall be obliged to inflict a certain punishment, will generally be

sufficient; but if he should disobey you, let nothing prevent you keeping your word; you must speak the truth.

Children are so nice observers, that in their presence you must be on your guard against insincerity to others. To receive an unexpected visiter with expressions of joy and welcome, and when she leaves to say how vexed you were to be interrupted, is but a poor practical lesson for your children. In short, it cannot be too strongly impressed on your memory, that *your example is a principal means of educating your children.*

Endeavour to cultivate in children a habit of self-command and self-denial. When you see any danger of your child being overcome by anger, quietly pronounce his name, or call him to your side; this has generally a surprising effect. If your words and actions be accompanied by a look of regret, it will immediately change the current of his feelings, and lead him to turn his attention to himself; in other words, he will examine what there is in his conduct that has given pain to his parent. A little sympathy with his wounded feelings will secure his confidence; and if you find that any one has acted improperly toward him, you should require the offender to avoid such conduct in future; or if, on the contrary, you find that he

has been angry without just cause, try to convince him that he was in the wrong, and to show him the folly and evil of being angry. When his mind is composed, point out to him the necessity of practising self-command—that without such a power he can neither be happy himself nor contribute to the happiness of others. Show him how often he is troublesome to those who wait upon him, and what self-command they have to practise toward him. Tell him, that if you were to be angry and strike him every time he tries you, he would be very unhappy. Here again he must be referred to the conduct of God toward his creatures: he has supreme power, and could, if he chose, strike us dead when we displease him; but he is patient with us, and forbears to exercise wrath. Point to the example of the blessed Saviour—he was meek and gentle, long-suffering, tender, and compassionate. If the child be familiar with Watts's hymns, repeat to him the hymn on anger. But it is impossible to dictate all that a pious and judicious mother would say on such an occasion; her own heart will be her best prompter; but what I recommend is the result of experience.

To teach children self-denial will not be an easy task. The love of self is so essential a

part of our nature, that it will be needful at first to offer a reward to secure an act of self-denial; but that reward must excite some of the higher affections of the mind, as, either benevolence, or filial or paternal love. For instance, if your child be playing with some toy that attracts the babe's attention, the latter will very probably, attempt to seize it, and cry if it be refused. It would be wrong to *compel* the child to give it up to the baby, or to reproach him if he will not; he should be kindly *requested* to yield, and induced to do so by the assurance that it would please you very much, and make baby happy. A well-trained child will generally yield to such persuasives, and his compliance should be rewarded by your kiss. When the babe seems pleased with the toy, say, "Now, my love, see how happy you have made baby; you have been practising *self-denial*, and that will always make you happy: don't you feel more comfortable now than if your little brother were crying for your pretty toy?" There is no reason to doubt that the ready "Yes, mamma," would be confirmed by the glowing cheek and sparkling eye of the gratified little philosopher. It might be advisable to repeat the circumstance to his father, and to dwell on the happiness that the child's self-denial had brought on mamma, baby, and

himself; the father's approving observations would deepen previous impressions. As the habit strengthens, *self-denial* will be practised without so great a stimulus; the child will feel pleasure in contributing to the happiness of others without thinking of self; he will become benevolent, generous, disinterested.

Before children know the value of things, or are aware that by giving part to others they diminish their little stock, they often *seem* to be very generous; they will run round the room with their cake or apple, and cry, "Taste, taste," to every one they see. Children a year or two older, who can better appreciate the value of their good things, and who have observed that every bite lessens them, are very cautious how they invite tasters, and often refuse to give a share to those who ask for it. Mothers must not be distressed at this apparent want of generosity in the older child; it will not continue long, if he be carefully trained; but to correct it will require the exercise of judgment. While you express the pleasure that the generosity of the younger gives you, be careful not to draw a comparison between the conduct of the children. Simply say to the older, "Should you like to see how pleased I should be with a taste *of* your cake?" If he come and let you taste,

take *a little*, that he may feel he has made a sacrifice to gain your approbation; but don't take *much*, lest he should be discouraged from offering it another time. He will thus be led to feel the great happiness he can purchase by a small sacrifice. Should he refuse to give you any, take no notice of him; don't blame him, but don't give him any sympathy in the pleasure which his sweets seem to impart, while you show him that you do sympathize with the younger one who has shared his good things with you. A plan like this, persevered in, will, I know, produce a change in a few months, for I have tried it in a case where the apparent want of generosity in a child caused me great uneasiness. A few weeks since he gave proof that, though he knew the value of things, he was not averse to practise self-denial in order to give pleasure to one he loved. I sent for two apples, and holding them both in my hand, asked the little boy (four years old) to take one. He first took hold of the finest, but after a moment's consideration he laid it down, and took up the smaller one. My thoughts were occupied with something else, and we had nearly eaten our apples before I recollected the singularity of his choice. I then asked him in an indifferent tone, "Why did you take the smaller apple, my

dear?" "Because I wanted *you* to have the larger one, mamma," said the child, quietly taking another bite. I thanked him, but did not praise him or caress him, though I was much touched with such an instance of disinterested kindness. I knew that the pleasure of having given me the finer apple, the feeling of benevolence, was of itself a sufficient reward, and I feared that by praising him, or by associating praise with benevolence, I should either lead the child to affectation, or lessen the purity of the satisfaction which he felt.

Children who are accustomed to the exercise of self-command and self-denial will be easily preserved from *quarrelling*. This is a habit so early contracted, that its slightest manifestations should be checked. The present and future welfare of all your children depends greatly on your training them to "dwell together in unity." They should be made to feel that it is indeed "good and pleasant," by your embracing the opportunity, when they seem most happy, to talk to them on the duty and blessedness of loving one another. When they have made some little sacrifice for their mutual pleasure, lead them to observe how happy they feel, and encourage any little acts of kindness that they are able to exercise toward each other. If one

seems interested in looking at something new or pretty, tell him to show it to the others; convince him that pleasure is increased by association, if each of the associated party be of an affectionate, self-denying temper. When slight quarrels have arisen, I have often found it sufficient to appeal to the fraternal affections of the children to induce them to seek a reconciliation. While writing this, a brother and sister, the former four, the latter two years old, were heard crying; on being called into the room, they had each a tale of wo to tell—the little girl had nipped her brother's arm, and he had called her naughty: we turned their attention to each other, and she soon ran to kiss brother's arm better, and he stooped to embrace her, and promised not to call her naughty again, but to help her to be good. When they were composed, they both knelt by their father's side, while, with a hand on the head of each, he prayed that they both might be actuated by the spirit of mutual kindness and forbearance. It was beautiful to witness the affectionate feelings they afterward evinced. If quarrels become serious or frequent, it will be necessary to separate children for a short time, and each should feel the desolateness of solitary confinement; on their liberation, care should be taken fully

to reconcile them, and to make them feel as much as possible the benefit and pleasure of reunion.

Some who read these pages may be inclined to say that children of from two to five or six years of age are too young to practise the moral virtues. I allow that they are too young to possess these virtues in their full bloom and perfect development; but they are not too young to receive the seeds of them. If, by neglecting to sow these seeds in early childhood, we only lost time and deferred their culture to a later period, we should even then unnecessarily inflict an injury on our children; but, alas! this would not be the only evil. Every virtue has its opposite vice, and that vice needs no culture. Neglect to lead a child to cultivate fraternal love, and jealousy will spring up in his bosom: neglect to train him up in habits of respect and obedience, and he will become contradictious and rebellious: neglect to form in him habits of truthfulness, and he will become deceitful: neglect to cultivate in him self-command and self-denial, and he will become the tyrant of the domestic circle. In short, virtuous habits are the only firm safeguards of virtuous principles, and *virtuous habits cannot be formed too early.*

CHAPTER X.

PUNISHMENTS AND REWARDS.

To prevent the future commission of faults ought always to be the object of punishment; it should therefore be inflicted with judgment, with composure, with affection, and with promptness. It should be suited to the degree and nature of the fault, and to the disposition and circumstances of the offender.

All punishment is of itself an evil. It inflicts pain either on the mind or on the body, and consequently, in its immediate effects, deducts from the sum of human happiness. It is calculated to produce an angry feeling toward the parent, to weaken the child's affection and confidence, to fill him with dread, and to tempt him to the practice of deception and falsehood. If such be its probable effects, the less frequently it is necessary to resort to it the better; and the less of it can be made to suffice, the less evil will result from its infliction. Let us endeavour to imitate the example exhibited to us in the conduct of our heavenly Father toward the great family of mankind. We see in him no tyrannical exercise of power: "He doth not

afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men." His arms are always stretched out to receive the returning prodigal; and it is evident, from all his dealings with us, that he wishes to inspire that love which casts out all slavish fear.

It is surprising at how early an age children may be made to understand the nature and design of punishment. If we exercise judiciously the high prerogative with which God has endowed us, they will soon perceive that we correct them, not for our own pleasure, but for their profit, that they may be partakers of his holiness. You should inform your children that it is God who has placed you in authority over them, and that you must give an account to him of the manner in which you have trained them up: that he will be displeased with you if you do not punish them when you can make them good by no other means. Tell them how angry he was with Eli, because, when "his sons made themselves vile, he restrained them not."

One of the greatest evils of severity in parents is its tendency to produce falsehood in children. In many cases the first lie a child tells is from fear of punishment, and that perhaps for a mere accident, or some act of thoughtless mischief. Where proper discrimi-

nation is used as to the nature of children's faults, this evil will be greatly decreased. On this subject, the use of correct terms, in speaking to children, is absolutely needful. "Naughty boy!" "Naughty girl!" are exclamations so often in the mouths of some nurses, that a child never connects a right idea with the term. When your child is doing something contrary to the rules of good breeding, such as entering a room too abruptly, or not showing proper respect to strangers, it will suffice to point out to him that it is rude to do so, and that he must not do it again; if this be done mildly and firmly, it will, probably, be remembered. If, however, a bad habit of any kind be formed, you must not expect it to be easily conquered; it will require line upon line, and precept upon precept. You must *assist* your little one to conquer it; but you must not call him naughty so long as he strives to obey you, and is overcome only by the force of habit.

Accidents must not be treated as faults, though children must be taught carefully to guard against them. If your child were to carry his little basin across the room in safety, he would very likely be praised for the wondrous feat; but if, on the stimulus of this praise, he were to seize a valuable piece of china, and in crossing

the room were to drop and break it, he would be in great danger of being called naughty, even if he escaped punishment; but would not your child's motive be the same in both instances? He wished to show his cleverness, and to obtain your commendation; he was unfortunate, not naughty; and you must teach him to distinguish between valuable articles, which he must not touch, and the cheaper ones, which he may touch; the main difficulty is to command yourself.

But children will often be very naughty, and you must prepare yourself for the trial. When they are mischievous and meddlesome, a most effective remedy is, to tie one or both hands behind them with a piece of riband, so as not to give pain, but to produce a sensation of confinement. To tie the feet together for climbing on furniture that has been prohibited, will effectually cure the habit. Even very young children see a suitableness in punishing the offending hands or feet, and will often submit to it without crying, if you do not accompany it with expressions of anger, which is not desirable.

Punishment should be made to correspond, as nearly as possible, with the nature of the fault committed. For instance, if a child, after being duly admonished, persists in behaving

improperly at dinner, and you remove him to another table, while your countenance expresses grief that his misconduct should render such a measure necessary, he will feel the punishment to be the consequence of the fault, and to be appropriate to it; but he would see no connection between behaving improperly at dinner and having his feet tied together.

In cases of disobedience, the best plan is to put the little rebel in the corner, with the face toward the wall, and a chair behind him; if he attempt to move it, sit down upon it yourself, till the cry ceases to indicate anger, and he becomes distressed; then ask if your prisoner will be good? you will generally receive a submissive answer, which should be immediately followed by the kiss of reconciliation. When a child has been punished, your attention should not be entirely withdrawn from him till he has become penitent for his fault and desirous of forgiveness; and after he has been forgiven, he should be affectionately reasoned with on the impropriety or sinfulness of his conduct. While his spirit is subdued by punishment, and his heart softened by reconciliation, he will be in a good state of mind for receiving the impressions you wish to produce. To punish a child without endeavouring to accomplish the ends

of punishment, *is too much like the exercise of arbitrary power; it seems more like the effect of revenge than of benevolence.*

If children have been well trained while infants, it will seldom be necessary to resort to corporal punishment. In cases of decided obstinacy, a smart smack on the arm may be needful, but it must not be given hastily, nor in anger. You must look serious and sorrowful, and must express great regret that you are obliged to whip. Point to the redness on the arm, and try to impress the child with a sense of the severity that has been used, for it is not the degree of bodily but of mental pain that constitutes real punishment. Many a child, who would laugh at a blow received in a fall, would sob violently at an angry word from an affectionate parent.

I can scarcely suppress my indignation while I briefly animadvert on the advice given in a work which I have lately met with, "Let it be a rule never to punish with the rod on the same day on which a fault is committed." The writer of this sentence would not object to your teaching your child to repeat that beautiful verse of Watts',

"The wise will let their anger cool,
At least before 'tis night,

But in the bosom of a fool
It burns till morning light;"

and then he would have you evince by your conduct that the sun must "go down on your wrath," as you could not forgive your child till the morrow; for surely we must consider that a very anomalous forgiveness which must be followed by the infliction of punishment. And what must be the effect on the mind of the child by this delay? On some temperaments these effects would be most distressing; alternate fits of deep depression and violent terror would agitate his little frame, and would most seriously injure both his physical and mental health, without producing any moral benefit. On others the effect would be to harden and brutalize the temper, to render the poor victim reckless of all consequences, and not unlikely to drive him from the paternal roof, to escape the doom that hangs over him. To conclude, it ought to be a maxim in domestic, as it is in civil government, that the *promptness* and the *certainty*, not the *severity* of punishment, are the most efficient preventives of crime.

I shall close my observations on this important subject with an extract from Miss Edgworth's excellent chapter on rewards and punishments. "When children begin to reason,

punishment affects them in a different manner from what it did while they were governed like irrational animals, merely by the direct associations of pleasure and pain. They distinguish, in many instances, between coincidence and causation; they discover that the will of others is the immediate cause, frequently, of the pain they suffer: they learn by experience that the *will* is not an unchangeable cause,—that it is influenced by circumstances, by passions, by persuasion, by caprice. When once, by reasoning, children acquire even a vague idea that those who educate them are unjust, it is in vain either to punish or reward them: if they submit, or if they rebel, their education is equally spoiled: in the one case they become cowardly, in the other, headstrong. To avoid these evils there is but one method; we must early secure reason for our friend, else she will become our unconquerable enemy. As soon as children are able, in any instance, to understand the meaning and nature of punishment, it should in that instance be explained to them. Just punishment is pain inflicted with the reasonable hope of preventing greater pain in future."

Rewards, to be really beneficial in the training of children, should be used very judiciously, and even sparingly. They are stimulants, and,

like all other stimulants, their effects will be followed by a corresponding degree of depression. Children accustomed to act only from the hope of rewards will soon do nothing without them. They will increase their demands till, at last, the parent's resources are exhausted, and he finds education at a stand till he has adopted a more practicable and less stimulating system. Wo be to the mother who purchases obedience with sugar-plums, or a good lesson with a new toy! Children should early feel that their happiness lies within their own power, and that it may be obtained by their own exertions; the pleasure of success is a safe and a sure reward, and the sooner children can be made to feel it so the better. Parents who have properly cultivated the love of their children will have an amazing power over them, by the exercise of sympathy and expressions of commendation: they value the praise of those they love, and will exert all their energies to obtain it. But even praise should be sparingly given, or children will seek for praise instead of success; and as in after life they may often command the latter when they cannot obtain the former, we should early accustom them to do with as small a portion of it as may enable them to make the needful exertions. "Then how are we to

manage our children?" and, "Are they never to have any indulgence?"—such will be the natural inquiries of the mother. I will endeavour to explain myself. Let the indulgences of appetite in children be given as proofs of affection, not as the rewards of good conduct, unless you find it needful to use such a stimulant to assist in correcting some habit which is difficult to subdue; in this case withdraw the stimulant by degrees, and substitute praise, and then gradually allow the success of the child to become his reward. If he has a difficulty to surmount in his lesson, for instance, show him that you sympathize with him; assist him so far as not to destroy his own exertion, and when he has conquered the difficulty, praise him for his attention and perseverance. "There is a persevering little boy; now you can read those words without help;" this will be a much safer and more efficient reward than either money, sweets, or toys. A smile of sympathy will often rouse the energies of a child, when he is striving to overcome some obstacle to success, far better than a promise of reward; the exclamation, "There's a noble boy," or a cordial shake of the hand, will fill his little heart with unmixed joy. The influence of sympathy on children can be duly appreciated only by those who have

carefully observed its effects. When you see a child struggling to conquer rising anger, give him your sympathy, it will assist him—if he succeed, give him your sympathy, it will reward him. R., a little boy, four years old, was playing with his sister A., two years old. She was not very well, and seemed inclined to teaze him; whatever he took she laid claim to, and the more he yielded the more exorbitant became her demands. At last R. looked impatiently at his mother, who calmly said, "A. is very troublesome and naughty; you find it hard work to conquer your temper, don't you, my boy?" This sympathy roused him to exertion, and looking seriously at his sister, he said, "Now, A., if you will be a good girl, and kiss me, I will forgive you." They immediately embraced each other. R. felt amply rewarded, when his mother called him to her side, and, tenderly kissing him, asked him if he did not feel very happy, now that he had conquered his temper? His animated and smiling countenance was a sufficient reply.

We should be careful not to instil any principle in childhood which will have to be unlearned in mature age. By making every act of kindness you show to children, and every indulgence you give them, the reward of good

conduct, they are led to think that it is because they are *good* these things are bestowed. But they will discover, in after years, that He "who makes the sun to shine alike on the evil and the good" adopts a very different plan. They will observe that many of what are esteemed the good things of this life, are often more liberally bestowed on those who disobey the commandments of their Maker, than on those who humbly endeavour to serve him; thus they will have to unlearn the principles instilled in childhood.

Strive to lead a child to examine his motives of action, and to make those motives as pure as possible.* Why did you do that? is a question which will lead a thinking child to self-examination; if he answer, "Because I thought it would please you, mamma," you should reward him by your expressions of thanks, and you should take that opportunity of striving to elevate his motives. Tell him that God has commanded him to love and obey his parents, and that he will be pleased with him for doing so. R., not four years old, who had been led to try to please God, as a motive to good conduct, went for his mother's slippers one day, and on re-entering the room said, "As I came up stairs,

* See Appendix, No. 11.

mamma, I thought God would be pleased with me for fetching your slippers." "Yes, my dear, God loves children to obey their parents, and to try to please them." Here the child's motive was good; he sought no immediate reward; he evidently felt the only reward of which we can be sure on earth—the approbation of his own mind, and the knowledge that he pleased God. A child who is accustomed to confess his faults to God, and to seek his aid to overcome them, and to consider his approbation as the highest reward, will be easily governed by his parents during childhood, and in youth will easily govern himself.

When the family consists of several children, it ought to be an object of serious attention not to place them in competition with each other. Do not reward one because he did better than another, but because he did as you wished him to do. There is so wide a difference in the natural powers of children, that one may merit more praise for doing a *little* than another for doing *much*. Quick children are apt to compare themselves with those that are slow, and to pride themselves on the readiness with which they learn their lessons, or perform any duty; and if parents are not very cautious, those who are slower in their movements and duller in

their perceptions will be discouraged, by being put in comparison with their superiors. This is not the place to discuss the necessity of emulation in public schools; we are now speaking of the conduct of mothers toward their children. It is the degree of exertion a child uses to overcome his difficulties, not the quickness which he evinces, that demands our sympathy.

CHAPTER XI.

RELIGIOUS TRAINING.

Those who have read the preceding pages of this little work, particularly the chapter on the cultivation of the moral virtues, cannot but have observed that I consider piety in the parents, especially in the mother, essential to the successful prosecution of education; still, I should ill satisfy my own conscience, or the reasonable expectations of my readers, were I not to devote a chapter to the subject of religious training.

Many parents, who think that their children ought to be religiously educated, are afraid of beginning too early to instil religious principles into their minds. It is true that principles

without practice, teaching without training, will do but little good, if they do no positive harm. What I would contend for is, that you should habituate your children to the performance of religious duties, and make them familiar with the word of God, from the earliest dawn of reason. Let them never be able to look back on a period of their childhood when they did not know something of the God who created them, of the Saviour who redeemed them, and of the Holy Spirit by whose aid they were led to expect the subjugation of their evil tempers. Let them not be able to recollect the time when they *first* kneeled at the footstool of divine mercy, to seek the protection of their heavenly Father, and to implore the forgiveness of their sins. Let them not be able to remember the time when the word of God was *first* introduced to their notice, and when they first began to know something of its sacred contents. Teach them not to be religious merely in their youth, but "train" them to be so from childhood, and then you may claim the promise of Him "who cannot lie," that "when they are old they will not depart from the way in which they should go."

The first religious principle to be instilled into the mind of a child is, that he has been created, and is preserved in existence, by a

wise and good Being, who loves him, and wishes to make him happy. When the affectionate child feels his heart glowing with love to his earthly parents, and expresses that love in his own ardent, yet simple language; when he is pressed to the maternal bosom, and told how tenderly his mother loves him;—forget not to impress on his susceptible heart that "God is love." Tell him that God looks upon all mankind as his children, and permits them to call him their heavenly Father; that it is he who protects us from harm, and bestows upon us all the good things that we possess; and that it is this great and good Being who enables you to provide for your dear child the various comforts with which he is surrounded. Mention to him some of the many blessings he enjoys, and let him kneel on your lap, and thank his heavenly Father for them. If you embrace every favourable opportunity of impressing on your child's mind that God is good, and full of love to his creatures, you will soon find that his heart is full of love to him, and you will have little difficulty in convincing him that it is his *duty to love God.*

Children accustomed to think and speak of their Creator as a kind, benignant Being, who *loves* them, and whom it is their duty to love,

will easily see the reasonableness of obeying him; particularly if you tell them that *you* strive to obey him and to please him. Inform your child that God has commanded you to train up your children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord; that he has told you, in his word, the Holy Bible, in which you read, that you must do every thing in your power to make your children good; and that if you cannot induce them to be good by kindness and gentleness, you must punish them.

By thus referring your own conduct "to the law and to the testimony," and by impressing your child with the idea that in all your conduct, as a parent, you are amenable to the bar of God, you give a holy impress to your authority, which is sure to command respect. You may thus lead your child to regard the Bible as the rule of his conduct, and you will strengthen your own commands and prohibitions by a reference to the sacred page.

Endeavour to interest the desires and affections of your young charge, by leading them to connect the feeling of happiness with a sense of the divine favour, and that favour with proper notions of what is right and good.

When they seem more than usually cheerful, and you know that their cheerfulness is the result

of conquest over their tempers, or of the exercise of some benevolent feeling toward their fellow creatures, show them that by obeying Him who has commanded them to be meek and gentle, forbearing and kind, they are rendered happy; their earliest impressions will thus be that to love and obey God are the only sure means of securing happiness.

Many instances are on record—and, alas! many others will never be recorded—of the minds of children being injured by the awful and incomprehensible majesty of God being too much dwelt upon in their early religious instructions. We may teach them to fear the loss, or rather the suspension, of his esteem and favour; we may lead them to fear to grieve so good a Being, but we must be cautious how we work upon their passions by the terrors of his wrath.

Early to acknowledge that God is omnipresent and omniscient, that everywhere his eye is upon them, and that he knows all they do, and say, and think—that he can tell the motives of every action, and can mark the rise of every temper—must have a restraining and highly beneficial influence on the minds of children. If they be properly impressed with love to God, and a desire to obey and to please him, the knowledge that he always sees them, whether

in the presence of their parents or in the company of their young companions, alone or in a large assembly, in the darkness of night or in the broad daylight, will stimulate them to exertion in subduing their evil tempers, and in exercising that self-denial and self-command so essential to domestic peace.

When your child is able to reason on the nature of his faults, you may explain to him that in the sight of a holy God they are sins; that God, who is himself perfectly pure and free from evil, hates sin; and that if his pardon be not implored and obtained, he will, at last, punish sinners. If you choose an opportunity, when your child has been guilty of some wilful breach of the divine commands, to explain to him the nature of sin against God, and the justice of that holy Being, he will become tremblingly anxious for his forgiveness, and he will, most likely, request you to pray for him. This it will be your duty to do, in plain and simple terms; it will also be requisite to direct your offending child to ask his heavenly Father's forgiveness in his own words, but you should not rest here. This will be a good opportunity for explaining to him the nature of an atonement, and the offices of a Mediator. You may tell him, that being yourself a sinful crea-

ture in the sight of God, you cannot offer any atonement for his sins, though you can plead with God to pardon them. You may then remind him of that Saviour of whom he has often heard you read and speak, who died for the sins of the whole world, and who will intercede with God in behalf of every little child who comes to God through him. Tell him how much the blessed Jesus loves little children, and how desirous he is that they should be holy on earth, in order that they may dwell with him for ever in heaven. Let your child repeat that beautiful passage, "Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven."

Point to the Saviour's example, who made it his constant endeavour to do the will of his heavenly Father. Show him, in the word of God, that though Jesus was so great and good a being, he, while a child, submitted to the will of his earthly parents, and that his last act on earth was to commend his mother to the care of the beloved disciple. Tell him how mild and gentle, how patient and forgiving, the blessed Redeemer was, and how needful it is that we should follow his holy example. The affections of children are easily interested in the love and sufferings of Christ, and they soon

learn to love one who has done so much to make them happy; they dwell with peculiar pleasure on the mediation of Christ, of his pleading with God for the pardon of their sins; and they anticipate, with childlike pleasure, the reigning with him for ever in heaven.

When your child feels that, with all his efforts to be good, his temper will often rise in rebellion against your commands, he will be apt to say, "Mamma, I cannot be good, though I do try." O, embrace such an opportunity of telling him something of the influence and offices of that Holy Spirit whose unseen and mysterious agency is vouchsafed to the youngest child who wishes to serve God. Tell him, that when he feels inclined to be disobedient, or is tempted to tell an untruth, he must pray to his heavenly Father to send his Holy Spirit into his heart, to teach him how to be good. Ask him if he does not sometimes wish to do a naughty action, and then feel something in his heart persuading him not to do it; the child will remember many such instances, and you may tell him that those good thoughts are given him by the Holy Spirit, to preserve him from the commission of sin; teach him to pray for the help of this good Spirit, to overcome every evil temper, and to enable him to obey his parents, and to

love and serve God. I feel that this is a very delicate subject on which to treat, and nothing but a sense of duty could have induced me to allude to it. In many professedly religious families, where children are taught to pray to God, through Jesus Christ, nothing is said to them of the third Person of the Deity. Yet we find nothing in Scripture to warrant this neglect; there, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost are spoken of as *equally* essential persons in that awfully mysterious Godhead whom we are commanded to worship and adore.

Children cannot be too soon impressed with a reverence for the sacred Scriptures. They should be taught to respect even the volume itself, and should not be allowed to handle it with the roughness and familiarity of a common book. "You must not play with that, it is the Holy Bible," lisped a little girl, just turned two years old, to her companion. The child could not know what the Bible contained, but she had heard her parents say it was God's book, and she saw them read in it every morning, and she knew that she must sit very still when it was read aloud.

Long before children can read in the Bible, they will be interested by having some of the incidents which it contains related to them in

the form of simple stories, the language of which mothers may suit to the capacities of their little hearers. They may select such as will be suited to the peculiar circumstances of the children at the time, and so apply them as to soften and subdue the heart, and lead the thoughts to holiness and heaven. To effect this, you should be careful that the passage you wish to impress upon their memories be made plain and intelligible to their understandings, and that it be practically applied to their consciences. Endeavour, by questioning them, to ascertain whether they understand the meaning of the words used; first separately, then in connection with each other. When you find that they comprehend the passage, try to elicit their opinion of its application to their own circumstances and state of mind. For instance, if you see a disposition to quarrelling in your little family, you may call them around you, and read to them that beautiful exclamation of the sweet Psalmist of Israel, "Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!" Here the words, behold—pleasant—brethren—dwell—unity—will all require explanation, before the children can make any application of them. Then ask, "What is good and pleasant? Is it pleasant to see brothers and

sisters quarrel? Are the children of one family brethren? How then ought they to dwell together? Do sisters and brothers who disagree dwell together in unity? Who loves to see brethren dwell together in unity? Is the great God pleased when he sees those who live together quarrel? Ought we to try to please that God who can always see us?" Questions like these will enable you to judge whether the children understand the passage, and whether they are capable of reducing the admirable lesson it contains to practice.*

But it is not by merely once explaining any part of Scripture that you must expect children to remember it; they will require line upon line —precept upon precept—here a little, and there a little. The lesson of one day ought to be repeated the next, and again referred to in a week or two.

The picture of any animal, or bird, or plant, or flower, mentioned in Scripture, will form a good subject for a lesson, or for a series of lessons. The picture of a lion would not only furnish you with a good subject for a lesson in natural history, but might lead to the history of Daniel, who loved his heavenly Father so well, that he would not neglect to pray, though he

* See Appendix, No. 12.

knew he should be put into a den of lions for doing so. I need not point out the moral lessons that might be drawn from such a subject; a hint is sufficient.

So multifarious, indeed, are the subjects which a proper study of the Holy Scriptures includes, that there is scarcely an art or a science which may not be made subservient to their illustration. But it is principally by the works of God that his word is to be explained. Are you a botanist?—What beautiful lessons will the "lily of the valley," and the "rose of Sharon," the "wheat and the tares," the almost endless variety of the "grasses," the "thorns and the briers," and even the simple "mustard plant," afford!

Are you a mineralogist?—The stones, the iron, the brass, the silver, the gold, and the precious gems of the temple, are objects on which you may expatiate with interest and advantage.

Has your attention been turned to natural history?—The Bible will furnish you with abundant specimens to explain, from the minute and disgusting insects which destroyed the comfort of the proud Pharaoh and his courtiers, to the wild beasts of the forest, and the camel of the wilderness.

Are you an astronomer?—"The morning star," the "bands of Orion," and the "sweet influences of the Pleiades," as well as the mighty miracle wrought through the agency of Joshua, will afford you an opportunity of explaining your favourite science to your youthful charge.

Do you wish to make your children familiar with ancient history and geography?—Impress upon their tender minds the historical and geographical information contained in the Scriptures, and all further acquisitions in these departments will be easily made.

Are you, in the fullest sense of the word, a Christian?—Fail not to impress on the minds of your children that the Bible is the word of God, whose commands we are bound to obey; that it contains the only unerring directions for our conduct in this life, and reveals the only sure foundation on which we can build our hopes of life everlasting.

You should never make the Bible a mere reading-book; that is, children should not read in it merely for the sake of learning the art of reading.* Encourage your child to a diligent

* This direction requires some modification. We would rather say, Let not the Bible be read until the child is weary. Make not its reading a *task*.—AM. ED.

attention to his lessons, by the promise of allowing him to read in the Bible as soon as possible; and occasionally let him spell out some easy verse which he has committed to memory, such as, "Suffer little children to come unto me," &c. Remind him how pleasant it will be when he can himself read the pretty stories you have told him, and promise that, when he can read it well, he shall have a Bible of his own.

If you wish your child to love the word of God, and to make it the guide of his life, do not, I entreat you, make it an instrument of punishment. I have known parents who, from the best of motives, have compelled their children to commit long chapters to memory, as a punishment for some fault they have committed; and they have thus rendered the sight of the Bible in youth as hateful as the sight of the rod was in early childhood. When your child has been guilty of disobedience, falsehood, or any other open violation of God's holy law, and has, by chastisement and expostulation, been brought to feel sorrow for his fault, and to seek forgiveness from his parents and his God, there will be a great propriety in showing him what God says in his word on the nature and extent of his fault; then you may *advise* him to com

mit to memory any passage that you may think appropriate, but it would not be prudent to *insist* on his doing so.

In short, while the Bible is treated with the reverence due to the word of God, endeavour to make your children love it as well as understand it. This may be effectually done, by your always speaking of it with a tone of respect and a look of quiet pleasure, and by your making your Bible lessons so short as not to fatigue the attention, and so interesting as to make an indelible impression on the heart. That mother has given her child no bad education, who has taught him to love, to reverence, and to understand the Bible.

In addition to loving God's word, children should be taught to love what is emphatically designated his day. They should be trained to regard "the sabbath as a delight; the holy of the Lord honourable;" they should indeed be enabled to feel that their simple morning prayer is answered,—

> "O may I love this blessed day
> The best of *all the seven!*"

Always speak of the sabbath not only as a holy, but as a happy day, and let your children *be accustomed* to call it *happy Sunday*. "What

day is this, mamma?" said a little boy one morning. "It is Saturday, love," replied his mother. "O, then, to-morrow will be Sunday, happy Sunday, and I shall go with you to chapel; and you will talk to me more than you can talk to me to-day, and we shall be so happy! O, mamma, I do love Sunday to come!"

If your children observe that you make every possible preparation for the sabbath, so as to make it a day of rest, and that your countenance is more than ordinarily calm and cheerful on that blessed day, they will have none but pleasing associations with its return. But you should use every means of preserving it sacred, while you make it happy. The toys of the week should be laid aside, and some book or pictures, not always accessible on other days, should on this be allowed. Your children should have as much of your society and conversation on this day as you can possibly spare them, and you should endeavour, as far as practicable, to draw out their thoughts and affections toward God and heavenly things. As soon as the child can be taught to conduct himself in a place of worship so as not to disturb the devotions of others, he should occasionally be permitted to attend with you; but this should always be granted as a favour, and spoken of as a gratification, till

the child is old enough to understand that it is our duty to worship God in his own house on the sabbath. While endeavouring to make the courts of the Lord a delight to your children, they must be made to feel that they stand on holy ground; that no lightness of look or frivolity of action is there to be allowed.

By the time a child can read, he will be easily interested in some of the devotional parts of the service, particularly in the singing, if you have accustomed him to sing at home. The reading of the Holy Scriptures, too, will rivet his attention, and, by encouraging him to read the lessons on his return home, and by explaining them to him, you may make this part of public worship highly beneficial. The text which is made the subject of the sermon will also attract his notice, when he can find and read it in his Bible. He will by degrees listen to the prayers and the sermon, especially if you are in the habit of calling his attention to those parts which you think he can understand, and of talking to him about them afterward.

Another means of inducing children to love the day and the house of the Lord is, to train them to love and respect the ministers of his sanctuary. Parents are too often careless and indifferent on this subject; and they speak of

the conduct and abilities of their pastor with as much freedom in the presence of their children as in their absence. If you speak only in his favour, and in a manner calculated to make your children love and reverence him, it is all well; but alas! how different, how lamentably different, is the conduct even of some professedly religious parents! How freely will they criticise every word, and look, and action of the minister of Christ, and hold up every little foible to ridicule or censure, in the presence of their children! And *then* they wonder that when they grow up they have so little love for religion, and so little respect for the teachers of it! Ministers of the gospel should be esteemed, not for themselves alone, but for "their work's sake," and your children should be accustomed to hear you speak of them with respect and affection. "Feed my Lambs," was the last charge which the blessed Saviour gave to the repentant Peter; but how can ministers feed the lambs of Christ's flock with either pleasure or profit, if you do not train your children to look upon them as their earthly shepherds.

You know that it is the respect and affection which your children feel toward you which cause them to pay so much attention to your counsel and reproofs; on this principle teach

them to love and respect their spiritual guides, if you wish them to profit by their admonitions and remonstrances.

In the next chapter I shall have occasion to point out the physical advantages which your children may derive from being taught to look with grateful affection on their medical friend. But of how much greater consequence is it that they should esteem and love those who have to minister to their spiritual necessities! Little will it avail, that the remedies prescribed by the great Physician of souls are offered to the acceptance of your children, if they are led to doubt the abilities of those who are appointed to administer them. The healing balm is presented, but they refuse to apply it to their wounded, sinful souls, because they have no confidence in the skill of him who offers it.

Those only who know the worth of prayer can form any idea of the importance of early training children to the habit of prayer, and they may acquire the habit before they can understand any abstract reasoning on the nature of the duty. By the time a child is twelve months old you should accustom him to kneel on your lap, while, with your hand on his head, you pray for him by name. I would not at first say more than, "Pray God bless my little boy, and

make him a good child, for Jesus Christ's sake!" The calm seriousness of your countenance and manner will command your dear child's attention, and the affectionate embrace by which the simple prayer will naturally be followed will soon cause him to stretch out his little arms to receive your nightly benediction. As soon as your darling can lisp his wants to you, accustom him to ask the blessing of his heavenly Father for himself, but do not lay aside the habit of first laying your hand on his head and praying for him. For some time the child's prayer will be in substance the same as yours, which you may gradually enlarge by asking God to forgive his faults, mentioning any one that has lately been committed, or begging him to take care of him during the night; he may soon add a petition for his parents, brothers, sisters, and nurse.

When your child is two or three years of age, he will thus be trained to the habit of prayer, and if you have instilled into his infant mind ideas of God, as a being on whom he is dependant for every good, as one who loves him, and whom he ought to love and obey, he will have some idea of the *nature* of prayer. You can tell him that God will make him good if he will ask him, and that he will give him a

good heart, and enable him to conquer every naughty temper; assist him to enumerate some of the many comforts which he enjoys, and to thank God for them.

Much has been said about the propriety of teaching children a form of prayer; but you will readily perceive that the plan I suggest makes any printed form unnecessary for very young children. If you continue for a few years to guide and assist them to seek with proper reverence for the blessings which they need, to express their gratitude for the comforts which they enjoy, to confess the sins of which they have been guilty, to ask for pardon for the sake of the blessed Redeemer, and to pray for the influence of the Holy Spirit, to fill their hearts with love to God and their fellow-creatures, no form, however excellent, can equal their own simple language.

O that it might be engraved on your heart as with a "pen of iron," that no engagement, not absolutely unavoidable, should prevent your superintending the evening devotions of your children *yourself*. This is a duty which you ought not to devolve on any other person, except the father. A few minutes will suffice for its performance; and where is the mother who would not give that small portion of every

day to training her child to hold communion with heaven.

You need not fear that prayer so conducted will become burdensome to your children; you will soon see that it is a delight to them. A little girl, about two years old, always asks to go to mamma and pray, as soon as she is washed and ready for bed. Doubtless the pleasure of receiving the maternal embrace and kneeling on her mother's lap are the principal inducements; but we have done much when we have trained our little ones to associate pleasurable feelings with devotional exercises.

Children should not be obliged to pray in a cold room, where personal uncomfortableness will draw off their attention from the duty in which they are engaged; and no speaking, nor any other noise, should be allowed during prayer, or it will soon sink into a mere ceremony.

When your child is capable of understanding that perfect form of prayer which Christ taught his disciples, you should explain it to him. You will find that he will not be able to comprehend more than one clause at each lesson, but it is of more importance that he should thoroughly understand it in a few weeks, than that he should commit it to memory in a few

days; when it is perfectly learned, he should use it daily, in addition to his own words. He might occasionally learn one of those beautiful petitions with which the Psalms abound. Other simple and comprehensive forms may be used, before you accustom him to pray without your superintendence. When he does begin to pray alone, advise him still to pray aloud, as such a habit will tend to prevent wandering thoughts; you should see, too, that he retires before he is too sleepy to attend profitably to the duty; impress upon his mind the necessity of always thinking, before he prays, of the particular blessings he wishes to solicit, of the sins he has to confess, and the mercies for which he has to thank his heavenly Father.

In the language of one whom we may, with propriety, style the evangelical poet of our own day,—

> "Prayer is the simplest form of speech
> That infant lips can try;
> Prayer the sublimest strains that reach
> The Majesty on high."

Perhaps some mothers may think that the plan for religious training here laid down will occupy too much of their time, and too much of the attention of their children. By no means. *I have* before mentioned, what every mother

cannot but have observed, that children require frequent change of employment, both physical, intellectual, and moral. A few minutes, or half an hour, according to their age, is as long as you can employ the attention of children on any specific subject, and you must be very careful never to make religious or Bible instruction a weariness to them. But if you be really wishful to "train up a child *in* the way he should go," never hesitate to point out that way; and accustom him to consider all human knowledge as subservient to the great end you have in view, namely, that "when he is old he may not depart from it."

CHAPTER XII.

DOMESTIC AFFLICTION.

HITHERTO I have spoken of the precious objects of maternal solicitude as though health and life were assured to them, if mothers only performed their duty, and sought the blessing of Him who careth for them on their labours. Alas, it is often our painful allotment to look on the less cheering side of the picture!

After the exercise of the most tender and judicious care for weeks or months, or it may be for years, disease may attack the object of your love, and you may have to tremble for its life. Should you be placed in such circumstances, remember that the recovery of your dear child, the comfort of your husband and of the other members of your family, as well as the preservation of your own health, and your consequent ability to nurse the little sufferer, will depend, in a great measure, on *your* self-possession. Let the best medical advice be obtained for the patient, and endeavour to ascertain from your professional friend something of the nature and probable course of the disorder, so that you may watch every changing symp-

tom, and report to him such as are important. Be particularly attentive to every direction as to the times of administering the medicines, and let no injudicious tenderness prevent you from making your child take them, should there be any resistance. Inquire of your medical attendant what food and what kind of drinks should be allowed the little patient, and let no one give him any thing which has been prohibited; if you evince a strong desire to follow implicitly the directions laid down, you may depend upon it that no unnecessary restrictions will be imposed. I mention these apparent trifles because I know from observation, that the best efforts of the most talented medical professors are frequently counteracted by the want of firmness, and by the injudicious, nay, *cruel*, indulgence of mothers and nurses.

To accustom your children at all times to look upon their medical attendant as a kind and judicious friend who will do all in his power to relieve their sufferings, and to recover them from sickness, will be of great service in the time of affliction. The confidence they will feel in his willingness and power to assist them will induce them to take the medicines without opposition, and to submit to the restraint and self-denial which may be necessary. Some

children regard a surgeon with horror, as a being from whom they must escape, if possible; and when forced into his presence, they are so agitated that he can form no correct opinion of the symptoms of the disease under which they labour. How seriously these feelings must militate against his usefulness to them may be better conceived than expressed.

Another important point is, not to occupy the time and attention of more persons than are requisite, during the early period of a child's illness, lest if it should continue long, the strength of the family and attendants be exhausted, and they should scarcely have energy to exert themselves at a period when the least neglect may be fatal. Above all, be careful of your own health and strength, for very much will depend upon you: make, if possible, such arrangements as will enable you to obtain a few hours' sleep every night, and try to breathe the pure air for at least half an hour in the course of each day. By these means your physical energy will be preserved, and you will be enabled to pay the necessary attention to your child till the termination of its illness.

But you will need more than physical energy in an hour of trial such as this, and you must *look to more* than human aid for support. You

will have to seek, in devotional exercises, that strength which is from above, and which can be imparted only by Him who has promised, "As thy day is, so shall thy strength be." Endeavour to commit yourself and your dear child to the care of your heavenly Father, and to cultivate that spirit of submission to his will which he requires of you. We are encouraged to pray earnestly, perseveringly, but not unconditionally, for the recovery of the sick; and our most earnest wrestlings at a throne of grace, on their behalf, should close with, "Not my will, but thine, O Lord, be done." If you cannot from your heart adopt this language, pray for grace to enable you to do so; and cease not to offer up earnest supplication, until you can say, with entire acquiescence, "Thy will be done." If you attain to this spirit, the bitterest pang will be past, even should the disease terminate fatally. None but a mother, none but a bereaved mother, can conceive what a mother's feelings are, when she sees laid on a couch of sickness the babe she has nourished at her bosom, and watched over night and day; whose trembling steps she has first guided, and whose lisping accents have first been addressed to her ear. And O, when those accents can be heard no longer, when the eye that once beamed upon

her with delight is closed for ever, who can tell a mother's agony! How fondly will she bend over the lifeless body of her departed one! How will she press her parched lips upon that placid brow! How gently will she stroke that shining hair, and kiss that beauteous mouth which was wont to smile at her approach!

But she sorrows not as one without hope. The cup of suffering is mixed with mercy: she knows that her darling child is safe in the bosom of his Saviour, and she feels that all her grief is selfish.* The sufferings of her beloved one have for ever ceased; he will never again feel pain or sorrow: while she is grieving for him on earth, he is singing the praises of the Lamb, who died that he might live for ever in heaven.

Should a trial such as this be your lot, let it not be lost upon you; let it lead you to strict self-examination, and to earnest prayer. Perhaps you had a numerous family and you were sometimes inclined to repine at the fatigue you had to undergo by night and by day. How gladly would you now resign the ease so dearly bought, could you restore to life and health the babe which you have lost! Or, more probably, you had made almost an idol of your little dar-

*See Appendix, No. 13.

ling—it had estranged your affections from Him who has declared himself to be "a jealous God," and who will admit of no rival in the hearts of his people. "As many as I love I rebuke and chasten." You had, perhaps, been forming plans for the future welfare of your child in this life, and had turned your attention too little to preparing him for another state of existence. Perhaps the highest honours this world can afford, you might have been able to procure for him; but his heavenly Father foresaw the temptations to which he would be exposed, and removed him from them to reign with him for ever in glory. Let the affliction lead your thoughts and affections to heavenly things. "Before I was afflicted I went astray, but now have I kept thy word," said the Psalmist; and if your trials answer the end designed by Him who sent them, so will it be with you. When you awake in the night, to listen in vain for the voice of your absent one, and "water your couch with tears," endeavour to improve the sleepless hours by "meditating on God in the night watches." O, those are sacred hours! You are perhaps the only wakeful person in the house. "Can a mother forget her sucking child?" Ah no, not even when he no longer needs her care: she still wakes, still listens,

and she "weeps because her child is not." Your first thoughts in the morning used to be on supplying his wants, and your devotions were perhaps frequently hurried and distracted: now, alas, how solemn is your communing with God and your own soul! You will indeed have to wrestle for that entire submission to the will of your Creator which will enable you to say from your heart, "The Lord gave, and the Lord taketh away; blessed be the name of the Lord." But you must seek not only for submission, but for resignation. Your child cannot come to you; but if you be a sincere and faithful follower of Christ Jesus, you shall go to him; and O what a happy meeting may you anticipate! No fears will then exist, even of a temporary separation: you will reign together with Christ. Surely the thoughts of being united with your child in glory will stimulate you to greater watchfulness, and to a more ardent devotedness to the service of the Redeemer.

If you have not been bereaved of all your children, you have cause for abundant gratitude. Many have lost their all, but you have still some smiling prattlers to beguile your wo, and to chase away your tears. Remember that God might have taken them also; but he spared in *mercy*; offer, therefore, to him your thanksgiv-

ing. Let the additional leisure you now possess be the more diligently devoted to training those that remain for heaven. Accustom them to speak of the departed one as gone before them to dwell with the blessed Saviour. Tell them that Jesus loved him, and took him away from this world where there are so many troubles, to that happy place where "there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain;" and that if they be holy children, Christ Jesus will receive them to himself when they die. By thus making death the subject of serious conversation with your little ones, and leading them to consider it as being, to the good, merely a transition from earth to heaven; from a state of trial, pain, and sin, to a state of perfect peace and holiness; they will be divested of all superstitious dread of an event that must sooner or later occur to them; and their only anxiety will be, that they may so live, that when the last summons comes they may be permitted to join the happy spirit of their departed brother or sister in the kingdom of heaven.

It is an undoubted fact, that many pious persons are, as the apostle says, "held in bondage all their life through fear of death;" and there is good reason to suppose that the impressions

made upon their minds in infancy may have led to this "fear." The desire to render your bereavement a blessing to your children through life, will powerfully stimulate you to control your own feelings, and to bring them into subjection to the will of God; and doubt not but that you will in due time receive abundant consolation.

Remember that you have been instrumental in bringing into existence a being who will live *for ever* in celestial glory. True, you would rather have been the instrument of training him up for usefulness in the world and in the church; you would rather that he had "risen up to call you blessed," to repay, as far as lay in his power, the tenderness, care, and self-denial with which you watched over his infancy, his childhood, and his youth; but such was not the design of Him who "seeth not as man seeth." He chose to take your darling to himself before he was polluted with any actual transgression against the law of his God. Washed in the precious blood of Christ, which cleanseth from all sin, the pure and happy spirit of your babe is joining the heavenly and triumphant throng in singing, "Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever."

Repine not, then, at all you suffered in bringing him into existence,—repine not at the far deeper, intenser agony which you endured when he was taken from you; but rejoice that you were esteemed worthy to be the mother of a being who is now in the possession of undecaying felicity, and who is wearing a crown of imperishable beauty.

After all your care in early training, after all your prayers for and with your beloved children, some of those who remain with you may long wander far from the fold of Christ; your faith may be most painfully tried, and hope may almost die within you, notwithstanding the confidence you endeavour to repose in the promises of God. Should this be the case, how grateful will you feel that one or more of your precious charge is safe in the bosom of your Saviour; far removed from the dangers and the sufferings to which the others are exposed. Be comforted, then, under your bereavement, knowing that He who can bring light out of darkness, and order out of confusion, can also bind up the broken hearted, and can "give unto them that mourn in Zion, beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness."

CHAPTER XIII.

CONCLUDING REMARKS.

In the preceding pages I have endeavoured faithfully to lay before mothers some of the plans and principles, by adopting which, as far as their circumstances will allow, they may reasonably hope to secure the great end of all Christian education—the temporal and eternal welfare of their beloved offspring.

It is my firm belief, that judicious early religious training is a means which God most especially blesses to the salvation of the souls of his creatures. In applying these means, parents are obeying the commands of God, and "He who *cannot* lie" has promised they shall ultimately succeed. But the efforts employed must be accompanied with *earnest persevering prayer* for His blessing without whose aid all our best efforts will be unavailing. He is certainly well acquainted with all our wants, weaknesses, and difficulties, but it is his will that we should not only feel, but express, our dependance upon him. And while it is our unquestionable duty to use every exertion for the *best interests* of our children, as diligently as

though our exertion alone could accomplish the intended object, it is at the same time our duty to pray with as much earnestness and perseverance as though we expected God to work without our instrumentality. Many professedly pious parents content themselves with saying, "We pray with and for our children, but we cannot give them grace, we must leave them in the hands of their heavenly Father." These parents cannot rightly understand the meaning of the text I have chosen for a motto, "*Train* up a child," &c.: this, and numerous other passages of sacred writ, evidently refer to the means that must be employed to produce the desired end. God commanded the Israelites, by the lips of his servant Moses, to teach his precepts to their children: "And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up."

But we must not only use every means in our power to train our children aright—we must not only pray with earnestness for the blessing of God upon these means—we must also secure to them the beneficial influence of *good example*. We must be able, on all occasions, to say

to them, "Be ye followers of us even as we also are of Christ." In order to this, we must ourselves become the subjects of divine teaching, so that we may learn and practise the first great principle of all domestic government, *self-government*. Our wills, our tempers, our passions must be brought into subjection to the authority of Christ; nor must we for a moment forget that our children will learn more from our actions than from our words, and that they will be more likely to imitate our conduct than to obey our precepts, should these, unfortunately, be at variance with each other. The influence and necessity of parental, particularly of maternal example, has been so uniformly inculcated in the preceding pages, that it will not be necessary now to dwell upon the important subject, though it is a theme on which volumes might be written.

In our endeavours to promote the spiritual interests of our children, there is one principle which we must be careful to keep in constant and active operation; this principle is *faith*—without this, our hearts will often be subject to a despondency which will cause our energies to languish, and which will render our exertions feeble, fluctuating, and useless. The faith that is required is far removed from a blind, unhal-

lowed presumption; it is a calm confidence in God, a firm reliance on his promises, and an humble expectation of the fulfilment of those promises. This is the principle that must mingle itself with all our prayers, and which must give vigour and constancy to all our efforts. God is honoured when we credit the testimony of his word, and the honour which we thus render to him shall not be without its reward. Listen to his own gracious declarations:—"Let us not be weary in well doing, *for in due time we shall reap if we faint not.*" "Cast thy bread upon the waters, for *thou shalt find it after many days.*" God, speaking of Abraham, said, "For I know him that he will command his children and his household after him, and *they shall keep the way of the Lord to do justice and judgment.*" Solomon says, "Correct thy son," that is, maintain over him a consistent and holy discipline,* "*and he shall give thee rest, yea, he shall give delight unto thy soul.*" In these passages we see precept and promise combined; and the fulfilment of the latter, while necessarily dependant on our obedience to the former, requires also the exercise of that "faith without which it is impossible to please God."

The encouragement afforded by the "great

*See Appendix, No. 14.

and precious promises" of the gospel is abundantly confirmed by numerous instances on record, which bear testimony to the happy results of early religious training. In the sacred Scriptures, Samuel and Timothy are prominently exhibited, as reaping the advantages of maternal influence, piously and zealously directed. In modern times we have innumerable facts presented to us, proving that a peculiar and powerful agency accompanies the faithful discharge of maternal duties. The number of distinguished Christian ministers who have attributed their conversion to the prayerful admonitions of their mothers is truly remarkable, as well as cheering. Of these we may specify the Rev. P. Henry, Presidents Davies and Dwight, the Revs. Dr. James Kidd, T. Reader, George Bell, Anthony Croly, and many others, whom it is neither needful nor possible to enumerate. "Christian mothers, let not the sight of your difficulties overpower you. Are you disheartened by a consciousness of the scantiness of your intellectual attainments? Remember that reading and observation will furnish you with the requisite information. Does a sense of spiritual deficiency give you a painful conviction of your unfitness for the performance of these all-important and imperative duties? Ask

of God, and he will 'strengthen you with might by his Spirit in the inner man;' he will give you 'the wisdom that is from above'—yea, 'he giveth liberally unto all, and upbraideth not.' With his Spirit in your hearts, you will be blessed with the discretion, fortitude, activity, and perseverance, which will enable you to conquer every difficulty. Be not then discouraged, for yours will, in all probability, be the unspeakable delight of beholding your children evince, in early youth, the power of Christian principle and the excellence of Christian character. If they do not become the ministers of the sanctuary, you may see them adorning their profession by a consistent conduct, and benefiting the church by their prayers and exertions."

On that day when "the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God," on that solemn day you will be amply repaid for all your anxieties and sacrifices. How abundant will be your joy, how complete your triumph, when you stand in the presence of your Judge, and with humble exultation exclaim, "Here, Lord, am I, and the children whom thou hast given me!" What will be your feelings when those children, in the presence

of God, of angels, and of men, "rise up to call you blessed?" Then, and not till then, will it be proclaimed before assembled worlds, how many "out of every nation, and kindred, and tongue," have been brought to a knowledge of the Saviour, and to a participation of his kingdom, THROUGH THE INSTRUMENTALITY OF AFFECTIONATE, JUDICIOUS, AND HOLY MOTHERS.

CHAPTER XIV.

ON THE CLAIMS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF STEPMOTHERS.

THE position in which a second wife is placed, with respect to the children of her husband by a former marriage, is one of peculiar difficulty. It is deeply to be regretted that the relative claims of parties so circumstanced are not better understood, as, until this is the case, we cannot expect that the stigma, so often unjustly attached to stepmothers, will be entirely removed.

There is, perhaps, no situation in which woman can be placed, where she may so fully exhibit the peculiar excellences of the female character, as in that of a stepmother; none

where the delicacy and tact so characteristic of the sex are so especially needed. Placed over those who have no natural claims on her affection and sympathy, she must be guided in the faithful and self-denying discharge of her duties by principles of a more elevated class than the mere maternal instinct by which most mothers are governed. Here she has, indeed, an opportunity of exercising that influence for good with which she has been so lavishly endowed by her Creator. Occupying a position in which she must rule by persuasion rather than by force, she must exhibit the apparently opposite virtues of firmness and gentleness, of patient endurance and persevering effort. She will require much of that charity which "suffereth long and is kind," which "beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things." But let her not be cast down, either with a consciousness of the responsibility her situation involves, or with an apprehension that she is not competent to the efficient discharge of its duties.

It is but too true that there are women who take upon themselves the important duties of a second mother without any intention faithfully to discharge them; in truth, without considering that the situation involves any. They

say by actions, if not in words, "We married the husband, not the children; if we do our duty to him, it is as much as can reasonably be expected of us." But can that wife perform her duty to her husband who willingly neglects his children? Allow me to ask one of these fair cavillers, if any such should read these pages, whether she plainly told her intended husband, before marriage, that she should neglect his children; if so, let the blame rest on him.

That there are men so overpowered by passion, or stimulated by ambition, as to consent to part with their children in order to obtain the woman of their choice, we are compelled to admit; would that they could all be treated as in the following instance:—

A lady was requested to become second wife to a gentleman who had been left with three children; but she declined the offer, stating that she was not prepared to take upon herself the duties of a stepmother. The gentleman renewed his suit, and assured the fair object of his choice that the children should not be any obstruction to their union, as he would send them to school, and she should never see them in his house. Her reply was worthy of a woman: "Now, sir, I am, indeed, decided;

the man who is capable of banishing from his home the children of his first wife, is not likely to prove either a good husband to a second wife, or a kind father to her children. No more need be said, sir, on this subject; your unnatural proposal speaks volumes."

It is the writer's opinion that a woman more frequently acts unkindly or injudiciously in this situation from the pressure of circumstances which she has not foreseen, than from premeditation. She probably enters on her new home with a wish to be happy, and to make all around her comfortable, but it is received with coldness and suspicion where she expected cordiality and kindness. The children treat her with disrespect, if not with positive insult, and in self-defence she is tempted to retaliate, and in time may become the tyrant of those whom she was prepared to love. Had any one whispered to the smiling bride that she would behave unkindly to the children of her adoption, that she would alienate from them their father's love, and drive them from their father's home—how indignantly would she have repelled the insinuation, feeling at the time conscious of having very different intentions! But let us hope that instances such as we have just alluded to are rare, and let us

turn our attention to the best means of preventing their recurrence.

A stepmother ought to consider that she has many prejudices to overcome, before she can secure the confidence and affection of her husband's children, unless they be mere infants. The world seems unwilling that the bereaved ones should find a substitute for their mother; and before a second wife is welcomed home, some busy whisperer has too frequently prejudiced the older children against her, and thus materially aggravated the difficulties which necessarily arise from her peculiar position.

A female who undertakes the training of children whose mother is living, is not always placed in an enviable position. It is her duty to curb the passions, to regulate the conduct, and to cultivate the minds of her youthful charge; no light task under the most favourable circumstances; especially as the mother reserves to herself the privilege of supplying the wants and gratifying the wishes of the children. But the mother feels that she is relieved from the most difficult part of her duty by the conscientious substitute she has obtained, and considerately observes, that "the governess may be rather strict about lessons and morals, but she does her duty, and she

cannot be expected to feel exactly as a mother does." No! the governess with all her difficulties, and they are neither few nor small, is not expected *to feel exactly as a mother does.* But is the same charity extended to the step-mother? Is she not expected both to feel and to act exactly like a mother?

The children of a former wife should be instructed by their father, and the friends of their own mother, to receive with thankfulness the attention and the kindness bestowed on them by their new relative. They should be taught to regard her *not as a mother*, but as a valuable substitute for the beloved parent whom it has pleased Providence to remove: as one who is able and willing to increase the social and domestic happiness of the family circle: as their father's wife, worthy of respect and esteem: as their mother's representative, deserving of kindness and affection. Alas! we fear that but few families are thus prepared to receive among them her who ought to constitute their light, and life, and joy.

But is the young wife always reasonable in her expectations? Is she prepared to encounter the peculiar difficulties of her new relation with that patient kindness, that gentle firmness, so essential to success? She must not

expect to find in the motherless children of whom she is about to take charge, that full flow of love which none but a mother can inspire, which none but a mother ought to look for. Affection cannot spring up in the hearts of children at a father's command, nor ought it to be required. It must be the natural result of kindnesses received, and of comforts enjoyed by them.

The stepmother, if properly alive to the important position she holds, will make it her first object to secure the respect of her adopted children by judicious treatment, and by evincing in all her domestic arrangements an anxiety to promote their happiness and welfare. She will be more desirous that they should regard her as a kind and tender friend, than that they should obey her because she has been invested by their father with the name and authority of a mother. She will strive to convince them that she loves them, for the sake of that father on whom she has bestowed her hand and her heart; that she pities them, because they have been deprived of the mother who watched over their tender infancy, and trained their early childhood. She will tell them that though she may not be able entirely to fill the place of the dear parent they have lost,

she hopes to be able to make them more happy than they were while without maternal care. She will explain to them that though they may have to submit to more restrictions, and to act with greater regularity than they have lately been accustomed to, they may be assured that it will ultimately contribute to their happiness.

A proper understanding of this kind will be absolutely needful between the older children of a family and the newly-arrived wife, in order to secure permanent peace. To those who are too young to know the loss they have sustained, it would be unkind to explain it: let them regard as a mother her who takes upon herself the duties and responsibilities of the maternal relation.

She who intends conscientiously to act a mother's part toward her husband's children, will be as wishful to know how to perform her important duties as a mother would be. She will find no great difficulty in securing the affection of the younger children, and she will endeavour to turn this feeling to account in their early moral and intellectual training. The advice given to mothers on these points in the preceding chapters will be equally applicable here, and we would earnestly recommend a careful perusal of them.

We have warned young mothers to guard against making their children mere playthings on the one hand, or idols on the other. These are errors into which there is no danger of stepmothers falling, and thus far they have an advantage. They are able to enforce obedience and exercise discipline, without that sacrifice of feeling from which the real mother too often shrinks: if they have to watch over themselves, it is that they may avoid either a too stringent exercise of the power with which they are invested, or a total indifference to the welfare of their charge.

But the stepmother must not only avoid evil, but she must shun its appearance in her treatment of her husband's children. The discipline which would be thought highly praiseworthy in a mother, which would be spoken of as a proof of her judgment, firmness, and self-command, would in her substitute be regarded as severe and cold-hearted. The world in general is inclined to attribute to the latter, motives the very reverse of what they would attribute to the former, even under exactly similar circumstances. The father also is apt to think, if he be too prudent to say, "Their own mother would not have been so strict," forgetting that he might have married a woman

of whom he would have been constrained to exclaim, "Their own mother would have kept them in better order."

If such be the difficulties which the step-mother has to encounter in training the younger children of a former wife, what must she meet with from the older ones? The writer's attention has been directed to this subject for several years, and the result of her own observation, and the opinions of those on whose judgment she places great confidence, is, that wherever it is practicable, the older children of the family should be sent to school, for a short time. It frequently happens that there is a great difference between the personal and domestic habits of the children, and their new relative. If the father have made a judicious second choice, the probability is, that he has selected a woman whose habits of neatness and order are sadly at variance with the habits of disorder and irregularity, which have crept into his household during the illness of his former wife, and the period in which he has had no sufficiently influential person at the head of his family.

It is much easier to conceive than to describe the collision which takes place when a second wife enters a household where disorder

and untidiness reign rampant. She begins zealously and actively to regulate and restrain, and is immediately reproached with destroying all comfort. Doubtless she may destroy the comfort which results from sloth and self-indulgence, but she hopes in their place to introduce the more enlivening and permanent comfort which results from industry and activity. Here let her beware how she proceeds; she treads on slippery ground, and must act with extreme caution. She should endeavour to convince the judgment of those who are old enough to be influenced by reason, as well as to work on their self-love, by pointing out the many advantages which would follow a thorough reformation of domestic and personal habits. She must be content to sap and mine, before she attempts to overthrow; or, in striving to raze the superstructure which sloth and selfishness have reared, she may destroy her own happiness, and prevent her future usefulness.

The difficulties of her position will be lessened by placing the older children at a well-conducted boarding-school, where their habits, and morals, as well as their intellectual powers, will be carefully cultivated. Such schools may now be found in most of our towns and villages: schools conducted by

men and women of education, sense, and piety, who strive conscientiously to perform their onerous duties as in the sight of God, as well as of man.

The children thus removed from a home which has too long been neglected, find themselves placed in a situation where they can draw no invidious comparisons. All are treated alike, and no one can say, "It would not have been thus, had my own mother lived." They see clearly that without the restrictions and regulations which exist at school, there could be no comfort either for teachers or pupils; and they are led to conclude that the good habits they were desired to form at home, would have tended to promote their own and others' happiness. Their visits to home during the holidays will now be looked forward to with pleasure; what seemed superfluous strictness before they left it, will now be regarded as comparative relaxation.

If the stepmother be truly alive to her own welfare, and desirous to promote that of her husband and his children, she will not neglect during these visits to cultivate the affection and secure the esteem of the children. She will encourage them to look forward with pleasure to the period when their education

will be completed, and they will again become permanent residents at home. She will point out to them the various means by which they may be able to add to the general stock of domestic happiness, and by which they may promote their own interests and the well-being of the whole family. If she be a woman of enlightened piety, she will impress upon their youthful minds the necessity of seeking the only true source of peace, and joy, even in that renewal of the heart, and that subjugation of the will, which true religion can alone effect. She will strive to convince them that though the loss they have sustained may never be entirely supplied, they may with confidence regard her as, next to their father, their most faithful and most judicious friend.

It is possible that a second wife may be introduced to a family where some of its members are too old to be sent to school. A new class of difficulties is here presented, and grace and wisdom from above are indeed needed in order to overcome them, nor these alone. She must now seek the cordial co-operation of her husband, not that he may exercise his authority, and command the outward forms of respect only; these will not suffice to satisfy the heart, or to secure that cordial good under-

standing, without which there will be no real happiness. If there be sons only, there will be little danger of collision; they will be occupied with business or with study, and will not be sorry to see an amiable and intelligent woman added to the social party. But with daughters it will be very different, especially if they have for some time managed their father's domestic affairs, and presided at his table. They will feel the introduction of a second wife as a usurpation of their power and privileges, they will no longer stand first either with their father or with visitors, and it will require much self-command for them to retire with grace into the shade. A judicious stepmother will, under such circumstances, endeavor so to arrange domestic duties as to give to each her appropriate share, so that the daughters may still feel themselves of importance in the household, and be prevented from suffering that ennui and listlessness, which most surely lead to discontent.

But there is more frequently cause of complaint from the unwillingness of grown-up daughters to take their proper share of domestic duties, and the new wife is mortified to find that she must either content herself with seeing her husband's house in confusion, or be the

servant of those who ought to be her cheerful and active coadjutors. While she is desirous of pleasing only the husband of her choice, they wish to be pleasing to all; while she is content to smile at home, they are anxious to shine abroad, and gladly leave to a stranger the duty of attending to their father's comfort, and to the training of their younger brothers and sisters. It will require a clear head and a steady hand to guide aright under these circumstances. The desired changes must be effected gradually. Let the father join his wife in requiring that judicious works be read aloud in the hours of leisure, and freely commented upon by all parties. It seems almost invidious to mention only one of the authors who have written on the duties of the female sex; but Mrs. Ellis's "Woman of England," and her "Daughters of England," are works so peculiarly adapted to the case in point, that we cannot forbear strongly to recommend them. Let me advise the new mother not to talk *at* her stepdaughters, but kindly point out what she thinks wrong in their conduct, and induce them, if possible, to join with her in striving to correct their bad habits. Let her also avoid speaking of their faults to strangers; nothing will be more difficult for them to forgive than

having their characters discussed in their absence, or in the presence of indifferent persons. They know that they have it in their power to make their new relative uncomfortable; and they will not fail to exercise that power if provoked to it. A strong appeal may be made to the young people so circumstanced, on behalf of the father, whose happiness must be destroyed if he see the wife of his choice treated with unmerited disrespect and neglect.

Shall we be searching too deeply into the springs of action in the female breast, if we remind the young stepmother that there is a danger of her feeling jealous of any real or supposed personal superiority in her adopted daughters? It is possible that such a feeling may unconsciously exist; let her, therefore, examine her own heart, and carefully guard against a passion so destructive of peace.

Let us also warn the stepmother against partiality toward one or more of her adopted charge. There is so great a difference in the tempers and dispositions of children, that their own mother has frequently to struggle against this evil. Some are so lovely in person, so amiable in temper, so noble in spirit, that it is impossible not to admire and love them. Others are so much the reverse of this picture, that it

becomes, even with parents, a point of duty to cultivate a feeling of love toward them. We do not require impossibilities. It is not likely that a stepmother should feel the same affection toward one who repulses all her approaches, and defies her authority, which she must feel for one who receives her with respectful kindness, and contributes as much as possible to her comfort; but if she cannot govern her feelings, she may control her words and actions, and she will find it the best and wisest plan to show no partiality whatever.

But it is not from the children of her adoption, with all their faults and all their perversities; it is not from the watchful jealousy of her husband, who is perhaps apprehensive that she may either neglect her duty, or stretch her prerogative too far; it is not from the envious, malignant world, who mark her every action, and misconstrue her every motive, that the stepmother needs to apprehend danger: it is from the purest emotions of her own heart that she has most cause for fear.

It is when she becomes *indeed a mother*, when she presses the dear object of her love to her throbbing bosom, that she has need to tremble—to doubt herself; to pray for grace and strength to perform her duty to those,

whom she now feels she never has loved, never can love, with all the tenderness, all the devotedness of a mother.

Let not the stepmother think we speak too strongly of the difficulty she has now to encounter. We have thought it needful to guard mothers against exciting jealousy in the first born, by the caresses lavished on a second infant; how much more, then, will it be needful for her to exercise caution, lest the children of another should think themselves slighted for one she feels to be most emphatically *her own!*

We are not so ignorant of the workings of a mother's heart, as to advise that any efforts should be made to check the full flow of her feelings toward the helpless object of her love; we only warn her against the injudicious display of those feelings. Let the mother indulge the natural impulses of her heart; let her exult in the new and delightful feeling her infant inspires; let her thankfully enjoy the happiness which almost overwhelms her: yes, let her confess to herself that she loves her own child infinitely more than she ever loved the child of another: but here let her rest. She must on no account indulge a wish that her husband may love her child more than his others; the

wish even is sinful, and may tend to awful consequences. How often has the almost heart-broken husband been heard to exclaim, "My second wife was kind to my children, till she herself became a mother!" and how much more frequently have the oppressed or slighted children been constrained to say, "Now that she has children of her own, we are evidently an incumbrance!"

It is true that the firmness and affection of a father may shield his offspring from open oppression, but no care on his part can guard them from the coldness and indifference, which are more galling to a susceptible mind than positive unkindness. But these things ought not to be. While the young mother feels how dearly she loves her own infant, she ought to cherish increased sympathy for those whose loss she can now appreciate: she knows that no one could fully supply her place, and should resolve so to act toward her charge, as she would wish another to act toward her own child, should she be removed from it.

One of the most fearful effects of a second family, is the entire or partial alienation of the father's affections from the children of his former wife. Who can foretell the result of woman's influence on man, when that woman

is the wife of his bosom, the mother of his younger children? The cares of business occupy the father's attention during the day, and if, on his return in the evening, he is required to listen to the dark catalogue of offences committed by his first children, while he is cheered with the praises and soothed by the caresses of the others, is it to be wondered at that he should in time look upon the one party as a painful burden, and on the other as a source of consolation and delight?

But we are not now addressing the wilfully unjust and malignant: we could scarcely hope that so feeble a pen as ours could reach hearts so hardened. It is our more pleasing duty to guide those who conscientiously desire to perform the duties which devolve upon them in their new relation. To her who, under these circumstances, has become a mother, who knows by actual experience what is meant by a mother's love, we would say, Do not, by any influence of yours, deprive the motherless children you have promised to protect of the greatest earthly blessing they can enjoy—a *father's love.*

But let not the stepmother look only on the dark and cloudy side of her prospects. An incident has been mentioned to the writer since

she commenced this chapter, which is calculated to encourage and stimulate this important class of society in the faithful discharge of their duty.

A young lady was united to a gentleman who had been left with one daughter by his former wife. The lady treated this child with judicious kindness, secured for her a liberal education, and, at a proper age, initiated her into the duties of domestic life. It need scarcely be added that the adopted child loved her stepmother, and strove to return her kindness by every attention it was in her power to render. In the course of a few years a second family surrounded the domestic hearth, and were treated with tenderness by the oldest daughter, more especially when she perceived that their mother's health was failing. That fond mother died, and left her own motherless children to the care of her stepdaughter. And well did the faithful and attached girl repay the kindness which had been exercised toward her. She supplied a mother's place to the young family, saw them well brought up under her own care, and most of them comfortably settled in life. "Cast thy bread upon the waters, and it shall be found after many days."

A stepmother may be placed in circum

stances more complex, if not more difficult, than any to which we have yet alluded. She may herself have children by a former marriage, so that there will at once be a union of two families, whose tastes and habits will be in greater danger of clashing, even if their interests be not opposed to each other. If the children be young, the difficulties will be much lessened, as young children become easily attached. If they be more advanced in years, it will require much judgment on the part of both parents to prevent petty jealousies and bickerings. True, self-interest may strongly induce both parents to be kind and just to each other's children, in the hope of securing kindness and justice for their own. The young people themselves may, from similar motives, be respectful and obliging to their new parent; or they may be naturally amiable and conciliating in their disposition and manners. If to these be added a liberal education and cultivated minds, there is great reason to hope that family concord may subsist: but it is on the influence of religion alone that entire dependence can be placed. If genuine piety reign in every heart, there will be little danger of discord pervading the domestic sanctuary. Parents and children who daily meet to hear the word of God, and to

bow in humble supplication at his footstool, will not need to apprehend any serious misunderstanding: still, such a position involves serious responsibility on all parties. If a third family be added, the difficulty will probably be decreased, as the younger children will be equally related to both families, and will perhaps be favourites of all.

Great as are the difficulties, and strong as are the prejudices the stepmother has to encounter, she may certainly evince the possibility of overcoming these sources of discouragement and anxiety. By steadily pursuing the course of duty, in humble reliance on divine grace; by manifesting a spirit of judicious kindness toward those who may not have the first place in her affections, she may substantiate the claims of woman to those refined and noble attributes which are the glory of her character. She may be rewarded by the esteem and gratitude of those who realize the advantages her influence confers upon them; to her they will ever look with mingled feelings of reverence and affection, and fondly will they cherish the memory of one who has blessed them with all but a mother's love. But greater still will be her reward in heaven, when that God who has marked her conduct, and sympa-

thized in her trials, will give her the tokens of his special approbation, and welcome her to that kingdom where the toils of duty are exchanged for endless rest, and the sorrows of tribulation for boundless joy.

And should the stepmother be instrumental in leading her young charge to give their hearts to God, and to devote their lives to his service, she may look forward with holy confidence to that day when they must all appear before the Judge of the whole earth, and when she may hear the joyful sentence, "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

APPENDIX.

No. 1, page 24.

WITHOUT pledging myself to the approval of every sentiment contained in some of the subjoined works, I can, nevertheless, with confidence recommend them to the attention of parents; they are works from the perusal of which invaluable assistance may be derived; they develop and enforce principles of the highest importance—principles, the knowledge and adoption of which will greatly promote the successful prosecution of parental duties. While I have endeavoured to imbody in this little book the most prominent and characteristic features of a rational and religious system of education, it cannot be supposed that a volume so small contains *every thing* which it is desirable to know on the subject. For those whose time and pecuniary resources are limited, I trust sufficient has been said to render them that aid which will enable them, with vigour and efficiency, to attend to the physical, intellectual, and moral training of their offspring. To those, however, whose circumstances will admit, I would earnestly recommend the perusal of the following works:—

Plain Instructions for the Management of Infants, with Practical Observations on the Disorders incident to Children. By the late Dr. Darwall, of Birmingham.

Observations on the Mortality and Physical Manage-

ment of Children. By Mr. Roberton, Surgeon, of Manchester.

The Principles of Physiology applied to the Preservation of Health, and to the Improvement of Physical and Mental Education. By Dr. Andrew Combe, of Edinburgh.

A Popular Manual on the Art of preserving Health, embracing the Subjects of Diet, Air, Exercise, Gymnastics, General and Physical Education, Occupation, &c., &c. By Mr. J. B. Davis, Surgeon, Shelton, Potteries, Staffordshire.

Dr. Carpenter (of Bristol) on Physical, and Intellectual, and Moral Education. This work is sometimes confounded with another on Education, by Carpenter, Shepherd, and Joyce; they are, however, widely different from each other: the latter furnishes directions for pursuing the higher branches of education, and is more adapted for students than for parents.

Miss Edgeworth's Practical Education.

Letters on the Elementary Principles of Education. By Miss Hamilton.

On the Improvement of Society by the Diffusion of Knowledge, or an Illustration of the Advantages which would result from a more general Dissemination of rational and scientific Information among all ranks. Illustrated with engravings. By Dr. Dick.

On the Mental Illumination and Moral Improvement of Mankind; or an Inquiry into the Means by which a general Diffusion of Knowledge and Moral Principle may be promoted. Illustrated with engravings. By Dr. Dick.

Hints for the Improvement of Early Education and Nursery Discipline.

The Mother at Home. By the Rev. J. S. C. Abbott.

Scripture Principles of Education. By Caroline Fry.

A Practical View of Christian Education in its Early Stages. By Thomas Babington, Esq.

Practical Hints to Young Females, on the Duties of a Wife, a Mother, and a Mistress of a Family. By Mrs. Taylor, of Ongar.

Hints to Parents on the Religious Education of their Children. By Gardiner Spring, D. D.

The Parent's Monitor. Compiled and arranged by the late Rev. David Barker.

The Family Monitor. By the Rev. J. A. James, of Birmingham.

Strictures on the Modern System of Female Education. By Mrs. H. More.

The Origin and Design of the Domestic Constitution, with its transferable Obligations and peculiar Advantages. By the Rev. Christopher Anderson, of Edinburgh.

Domestic Portraiture, or the successful Application of religious Principle in the Education of a Family, exemplified in the Memoirs of three of the deceased Children of the Rev. Legh Richmond.

No. 2, page 51.

"There is a contrivance that answers as a shower and general nursery bath, and which has at least the merit of being cheap and simple. It consists of a tub, four feet long by two wide, and two and a half deep, lined with lead. This is set lengthways against the nursery wall, or better in a recess. Over it, a couple of feet higher than its margin, projects a stop-cock, attached to a pipe conveying cold water. Under the nozle of the cock is a tin plate, pierced with holes, having a narrow rim, which makes it precisely resemble the segment of a sieve—the

straight edge being toward the wall. It is fixed to the wall by means of a staple and catch, and may be removed at pleasure. This is the whole apparatus. In using it, the child is set in the tub, under the sieve, when the stop cock being turned, a plentiful shower is received. In administering the warm and other descriptions of bath, the tub will of course answer perfectly."

"The PRESS SHOWER BATH is not proper for children, unless some one enters it along with them. All alarm arising from such a cause, or in the employment of any other description of bath, is as much as possible to be guarded against." ROBERTON.

No. 3, page 67.

"But the evils and wretchedness occasioned by tight lacing are not arrested by its effects on the *respiration*. The *circulatory* system suffers greatly from the want of room experienced by the heart in its operations; but, probably, *the digestive organs* bear the heaviest burden of the ills. The stomach, liver, and other most important organs of this system experience a direct compression, a compression that has been known, indeed, to leave indelible and distinct traces on the liver after death. The *nervous system* is a material sufferer, both in the pain felt in the immediate seat of the compression, and in other parts, such as headache, &c.

"As tight stays are usually worn previously to the full growth of the body, we are justified in ascribing to them a more potent influence. Indeed the natural consequence of their employment must be to prevent the full development of the portion of the frame they encompass, and of all the precious organs it contains.

"When ladies have been habituated for ages to rely

on an artificial prop to *maintain an erect posture*, thus superseding the use of the organs God has given them for this end; and when this method of art has been applied even in tender childhood, to give figure and support to the bust, it may be difficult to convince them that, if wholly untutored by art, it is perfectly able to uphold itself. Yet one of the clearest and most unequivocal principles ascertained on the physiology of motion is, that the surest and only certain way of imparting strength to the muscles and bones, and energy and gracefulness to their motions, is to leave them, unaided, to bear the whole weight and force of their own efforts; and that the immediate consequence of all the assistance of this kind is to render them unequal to the exercise of their functions.

"If, therefore, both beauty and a good carriage are most surely destroyed by the very means which ignorance has relied upon for their perfection, what is the proper *remedial course to be adopted?* Strictly, in those who have already, as it were, rendered themselves cripples, gradually to relax their 'lacings,' and to banish the steel and whalebone, which prove a true defence to the disease and to death, which securely lurks behind them; and in those pliant shoots not yet encased in this poisoned armour, to dispense with every instrument and degree of compression that is not indispensable to avoid a looseness of attire about the lower portion of the bust. These recommendations are simple and easily complied with, and the result of their observance will be a large measure of comfort and true enjoyment, as well as the ensurance of what have somewhat libellously been represented to be the prime objects of female desire, beauty and a good carriage." DAVIS.

No. 4, page 76.

"At meals, spring water is the best beverage. He that has been accustomed to no other has reason to be thankful. In some cases, and perhaps in large towns generally, whey might be preferable, on account of its laxative effect. The very common practice of giving even young children ale, porter, wine, and punch, cannot, in any words I choose to employ, be sufficiently reprobated; and as to those who permit them to have ardent spirits, under any pretence whatever, they are probably alike inaccessible to advice and reproof. This practice is a sure and lamentable, but, for the sake of human nature, it is to be hoped not very extensive, cause of infantile mortality." ROBERTON.

No. 5, page 77.

"Muscular action causes an afflux of blood and nervous energy to the surface and extremities, and if food be swallowed whenever the activity ceases, and before time has been allowed for a different distribution of the vital powers to take place, the stomach is taken at disadvantage, and, from the want of necessary action of its vessels and nerves, is unable to carry on digestion with success." DR. A. COMBE.

No. 6, page 83.

"To instruct youth in the languages and in the sciences is comparatively of little importance, if we are inattentive to the habits they acquire, and are not careful in giving to all their different faculties, and all their different principles of action, a proper degree of employment. Abstracting entirely from the culture of their moral powers, how-

extensive and difficult is the business of conducting their intellectual improvement; to watch over the associations they form in their tender years; to give them early habits of mental activity; to rouse their curiosity, and to direct it to proper objects; to exercise their ingenuity and invention; to cultivate in their minds a turn for speculation, and at the same time preserve their attention alive to the objects around them; to awaken their sensibilities to the beauties of nature, and to inspire them with a relish for intellectual enjoyments." DUGALD STEWART.

No. 7, page 95.

"We deprecate excessive mental exertion in children. The physical system must be the first object. If the order of nature be reversed, the mind will, eventually, suffer for it, as well as the body. It would often be easy for a skilful parent to make a child a prodigy, but a judicious parent never will attempt it. Premature and luxuriant growth of mind will seldom, if ever, be found to spring from a vigorous root. It will be viewed, by those who know the laws of human nature, as a disease, and such it will generally prove, even in the estimation of the mere superficial observer. We do not doubt that many have sunk into an early grave through the unnaturally rapid development of their faculties, and the excessive excitement of mental and physical sensibility which is usually the cause or effect of it; and still more have had the progress of their bodily health and strength impaired, their minds have sunk into a state of stagnant listlessness, and the promise of early genius has been completely disappointed, and followed by a train of physical, and mental, and moral evils, which should serve as a beacon to the vain or unwary." CARPENTER.

No. 8, page 126.

"Would we have religious instruction produce a permanent effect upon the mind, we must take care that nothing enters into our plan of education which may counteract its influence. If we, indeed, wish our children to pay obedience to the divine command, we shall not despise, as trivial or insignificant, the slightest circumstance by which the selfish or sensual passions and desires may be excited, cherished, or inflamed. Nor shall we neglect the cultivation of those benevolent affections which the spirit of religion purifies and brings to perfection. Unless we are thus consistent, we need not flatter ourselves that by our exhortations we fulfil the benign command of our Lord, whose gracious desire it is, that we should not only 'suffer little children to come to him,' but that we should remove all obstacles that eventually deter them, and be careful that we '*forbid them not.*'" MISS HAMILTON.

No. 9, page 130.

"Excessive indulgence is often viewed in a very venial light in the earliest periods of education, in the education of infancy; but those who carefully watch the progress of the mind, will agree with us in opinion, that indulgence then either prepares the way for habitual continued indulgence in childhood, to the weakening and prevention of the most valuable moral qualities, or treasures up for it pains, and privations, and disappointments, which, unless very judiciously managed, must break the activity of the mind, or sour the temper; and that it even lessens the comforts of infancy, for its gratifications cannot always be acceded to, and the more its injurious de-

sires are gratified, the more numerous they necessarily become, so as to be continually adding to its painful disappointments." CARPENTER.

No. 10, page 133.

In a widely circulated work "On the Mental Illumination and Moral Improvement of Mankind," by Dr. Dick, we have in page 133 the following quotation from Witherspoon's Letters on Education:—"As soon as they begin to show their inclination by desire or aversion, let single instances be chosen now and then, not too frequently, to contradict them. For instance, if a child shows a desire to have any thing in his hand that he sees, or has any thing in his hand with which he is delighted, let the parent take it from him, and when he does so, let no consideration whatever make him return it at that time. Then at a considerable interval, perhaps a whole day is little enough, let the same thing be repeated. In the mean time it must be carefully observed, that no attempt should be made to contradict the child in the intervals. Not the least appearance of opposition, if possible, should be found between the will of the parent and that of the child, except in those chosen cases when the parent must always prevail. Neither mother nor nurse should ever presume to condole with the child, or show any signs of displeasure at his being crossed, but on the contrary, give every mark of approbation. This experiment frequently repeated, will in a little time so perfectly habituate the child to yield to the parent whenever he interferes, that he will make no opposition. I can assure you from experience, having literally practised this method myself, that I never had a child of twelve months old but would suffer me to take any thing from him or

her without the least mark of anger or dissatisfaction, while they would not suffer any other person to do so without the bitterest complaints."

Had I met with the preceding extract in a work of inferior merit, I should not have thought it necessary to notice it, but should have trusted to the common good sense of parents to reject the proposed plan with the indignation it so justly merits. The authority of Dr. Dick is however too great to warrant the extract being passed over in silence. It is with great reluctance that I presume to condemn any thing which *he* approves, but as a mother I must enter my protest against any pain, physical or mental, being *unnecessarily* inflicted on the helpless objects of parental care. Dr. Witherspoon advises that the moment of the infant's highest happiness should be chosen to inflict the greatest mental pain which it is capable of enduring—that the object which imparts this happiness should be taken from it, not because it is injurious or improper in itself, but with a view to some ulterior benefit which the child is to derive from the pain thus unfeelingly inflicted. To state this benefit in his own words: "I never had a child of twelve months old, but would suffer me to take any thing from him or her without the least mark of anger or dissatisfaction; *while they would not suffer any other person to do so without the bitterest complaints.*" Now could we admit that this unresisting submission to the caprice of one parent were morally beneficial to the child, would it counterbalance the evil of "the bitter complaints" which it uttered when "any other person" opposed its wishes, however unreasonable those wishes might be? Certainly not. I allow that a child must often be thwarted before it is capable of comprehending its parents' motives for withholding or

withdrawing the desired object; but in such cases where the infliction of pain is unavoidable, every effort should immediately be made to attract its attention to some other pleasing object, and the parent should endeavour to convince it by that language of the countenance, which an infant so early understands, that the wished-for object is withheld because the possession of it would be wrong or dangerous.

There is another error in Dr. W.'s system which cannot but strike every considerate mother: "In the mean time it should be carefully observed that no attempt should be made to contradict the child in the intervals. Not the least appearance of opposition should, if possible, be found between the will of the parent and that of the child, except in those chosen cases when the parent must always prevail." So, in order to secure the passive obedience of the child to the caprice of the parent *once a day*, it must be permitted to contract any and every kind of bad habits during the interval! In order that the child may yield implicitly to *one*, it must be allowed to rebel against every other! This will never do. A child should be trained to obey all who are placed over it, and in order to effect this, it should never be contradicted needlessly, nor yielded to injudiciously. The candid acknowledgment of Dr. W., that while the child would yield unresistingly to him, it would yield to no one else, is the severest censure on his system that could have been penned. What benefit has the poor babe derived from the daily torture which has, for so many months, been inflicted upon it? None whatever. Its temper is still unsubdued; it will not suffer any check, however necessary, without evincing its disobedience and displeasure by the "bitterest complaints."

Let me advise, let me earnestly entreat parents to reflect before they adopt a plan so evidently calculated to diminish the happiness and imbitter the temper of their children.

No. 11, page 162.

"Another point of great importance is, that we early accustom children to reflect on their actions and dispositions, and compare them with the Scripture rule of duty. A want of this tendency to reflect on the past, is one cause of that deficiency which we often observe in the power of the conscience, even where its dictates are correct. It should be exercised as soon as our children are capable of recollection and reflection: and it will lay the foundation of a most important habit, if we accustom them, as soon as their minds have made sufficient progress, every evening to think of the conduct of the day. Such an employment, early formed under the observation of the parent, and indeed at first exercised by parental aid and influence, will have the most valuable effect. It will produce an habitual disposition to self-inspection; it will make duty more thought of, and obedience to duty more an object; and it will, if steadily cultivated, become itself a habit, which will retain its influence through life, and effectually prevent that thoughtlessness as to our conduct, and the effects of it, which is in the foremost ranks among the causes of disobedience and neglect of Christian duty." CARPENTER.

No. 12, page 174.

Since the directions in the 133d page were written, I have, for the first time, met with "Gall's Help to the Gospels:" the plan which it develops is substantially the same as the one I have recommended. For the instruc-

tion of young persons whose understandings have received some degree of cultivation, this is an invaluable work. Mothers also will derive important assistance from it in their early efforts to impart, in their own simple language, a knowledge of the Scriptures to their young children.

No. 13, page 192.

The author would here recommend to bereaved mothers an interesting little volume, entitled "A Cypress Wreath for an Infant's Grave;" with an Introduction, and Essay on Infant Salvation: by the Rev. John Bruce, minister of the Necropolis, Liverpool.

No. 14, page 201.

"Religious education is frequently too negligently and capriciously maintained, even when it is not totally omitted. It should be attended to with anxious earnestness, systematic order, and perpetual regularity. It should not be maintained as a dull form, an unpleasant drudgery, but as a matter of deep and delightful interest. The heart of the parent should be obviously and entirely engaged. A part of every returning sabbath should be spent by him in the instruction of his filial charge; and his concern should be imbodied with the whole habit of parental conduct. The father may lead the usual devotions at the family altar; the mother may join him in teaching their children catechisms, hymns, and Scripture; but if this be unattended by serious admonition, visible anxiety, and strenuous effort to lead their children to think seriously on religion, as a matter of infinite importance, but little good can be expected. The want of discipline, wherever it exists, is supplied by confusion and

domestic anarchy. A parent may deliver the best instructions, but if he do not by discipline eradicate evil tempers, correct bad habits, repress rank corruptions, nothing excellent can be looked for. He may be a good prophet, and a good priest, but if he be not also *a good king*, all else is vain. When once a man breaks his sceptre, or lends it to his children as a plaything, *he may give up his hopes of success from a religious education.*"

REV. J. A. JAMES.

"Let it be remembered that, as children have every thing to learn, it is absolutely necessary that there should be one quarter in which they may and must place implicit confidence. These earliest years are the most important of human existence; and yet, during these years, the child must depend almost entirely upon you. What does the dear little prattler know about evidence, or the degrees of it? And if his faith were to depend on evidence, what would become of himself personally, and what would become of the time and patience of his parents? In short, the stock of faith, or implicit dependance, which he requires, until he reach, perhaps, his twelfth or fourteenth year, may be said to be more than he requires afterward. Now who is it that has instinctively qualified him for reliance, for implicit reliance on your testimony? For see, if you conduct yourself wisely, notwithstanding all the corruption of human nature, see how absolute is your sway over this immortal being! See how instinctively he watches you, and follows and imitates! See how he looks at your face, and your hands, and all your motions! Observe especially at certain seasons, how peculiar to him, while he sits on your knee, are the very tones of your voice! And what use are you to make of that voice? What influence

are those tones to have on his ear?—tones which cannot be supplied by any other individual. And how singularly providential is the adaptation of the infant's mind to *your* instructions, when it is observed that *mere testimony* or *affirmation* is all that is wanted—for upon your simple affirmation he confidently, without hesitation, relies. Only treat him with fairness and integrity; inform yourself *accurately* of what you wish to inform him; and though he will charm you, and affect you, and even puzzle you with inquiries, still he will receive *your* testimony. Though he may, and will, early evince that he is a sinner—that he has a will of his own, and is too prone to disobedience; still after all, acting as has been stated, long will it be before he will doubt your word! Go on then. If you really desire to make most of the day, set out early in the morning. Go on, filling and informing his mind—storing it with truths and facts; but above all, heavenly truth; and he will receive all without any hesitation, as far as his memory and understanding can go. Yield to the glow of maternal love, and pour forth valuable instruction on his mind with all the tenderness and warmth of which you are capable. Long after you are cold in the grave will these tones of yours, and these truths, and all your favourite maxims, nay, your very smiles, and sighs, and tears, return upon him. Then, too, will these facts, which he is daily verifying, and these truths, enforced in the days of his infancy, by all that was tender and impressive in a mother's voice;—then will they remain, and produce impressions more indelible than any of their successors; nay, even when he becomes *his own* master, and can range abroad, and receive instruction from teachers and companions of *his own* selection, then, indeed, if you have done your duty, will he ascertain that

you stood in such a relation to him as none but a mother ever *can* occupy."

ANDERSON ON THE DOMESTIC CONSTITUTION.

"Should I be asked—What has been the first subject of my thoughts in the morning—what has occupied my mind most during the day—to what have all my plans and employments referred; and respecting what have my strongest hopes and most painful apprehensions been excited?—I should instantly answer—MY CHILDREN. I have suffered far more anxiety and perplexity respecting them, than from any other source. I cannot tell you how many times my heart has sunk with the discouraging conviction that I had none of that knowledge of human nature, and the best methods of regulating it; none of that patience; none of that consistency and dignity of character, which would enable me to govern my children well; which would make them respect and love me. But all my efforts have never appeared to me to effect any thing, except so far as I sought God's blessing upon them. As I fulfil this duty, in the same proportion do I perceive that my endeavours are successful, and my difficulties vanish. I find that I must go to God each morning, and ask for wisdom and patience through the day: I must entreat him to render my children mild and teachable; and to bless my exertions for their good, not according to their amount, but his own abundant goodness. When I do this with any degree of faithfulness, I am surprised at the ease with which I control them; the good temper that they exhibit through the day, and the wonderful salutary effect of discipline if I am obliged to use it. I find also that my own unassisted efforts at *self-control*, which is *indispensable* if we would control others, can

never, alone, render me forbearing, mild, and consistent. I must go to the Bestower of all correct feelings: else my children will witness in me a want of equanimity and good temper, and thus my influence over them will be counteracted.

"The inference which I draw from my own experience is this; that without religion we can never properly discharge *all* the maternal duties. Without it we cannot confidently expect God's blessing on our children; we cannot pray for them as we ought; we cannot hope for those restraining influences of his Spirit which shall render them tractable and ourselves patient." ANON.

THE ADVANTAGES OF AN EARLY DEVELOPMENT OF RELIGIOUS FEELING.

Translated from the French of Madame Necker de Saussure.

THUS far I have reasoned much, have recommended scrutiny, and invoked experience; perhaps I shall not be accused of a blind enthusiasm if I now speak of religion. I have wished to come to this subject, and notwithstanding, now that I have fulfilled my intention by first describing infancy, a sort of fear, although I know not why, restrains me; the grandeur of the subject astonishes and suspends my faculties; and I remember only the weakness of the age I have to do with. How shall I express my desire, how advise to present to the limited intelligence of a child of three or four years, the object which surpasses all intelligence, which could not be embraced by our mind in its most perfect development?

Nevertheless, I will say, that in the contemplation of such an object, all idea of common proportion vanishes, all appears placed upon the same level. To compre-

hend God! who can do it but God himself? Men, angels, children, we can only prostrate ourselves before him. To adore and bless him, to obey his holy law, to submit to his immutable decrees, to have a glimpse of his perfections without seeing them in all their lustre, such ought to be our employment in time and in eternity.

The child is in many respects happily qualified to fulfil this universal vocation. Less fettered than we are by rooted habits, his ties with the earth less binding, he can believe what he does not see, and love what he does not intimately know. Grave and solemn impressions are sometimes painted in his looks, but as yet he wants language to express them. His face has given the idea of that of angels: radiant, celestial, touching, it has been used as an emblem of the adoration of pure spirits. His whole language is a prayer: feeling more than we do his own weakness, he also knows better his need of assistance, and he possesses much more the spirit of filial tenderness. What does he then want in order to approach his God? Religion sleeps in his bosom, if I may so say; it is less necessary to inspire, than to awaken it.

The soul is naturally religious; this fact, which is conspicuously shown in the annals of the human race, may be made manifest in the tenderest infancy; but education ought to place it in the strongest light, and this is its most important task.

This task ought undoubtedly to be fulfilled. We could not exempt the child from the laws imposed by humanity, even when the purpose is to communicate to him the best of all privileges. Our most natural feeling only becomes manifest when the exciting cause is present; otherwise it is only a vague desire, a want unsatisfied.

Even in this ambiguous state, a propensity may exhibit signs of existence, although it does not possess the means of gratification. .....To develop the noblest instinct of humanity, by giving it a right direction; to bestow upon the young child such an amount of religious instruction as is meet for him, proportioning it to his mental progress—this is our duty; and cares, in themselves so sweet, will also be rewarded with success. But the longer we delay, this success, otherwise infallible, will become uncertain, or difficult to secure.

It seems that sometimes a reverence for holy things deters parents from presenting the idea to their children before they have attained the age of reason. Such a scruple would be excusable; but why are those who feel it exempt from the same when other objects are in question which they also reverence? Do they raise a similar doubt when the desire is to excite some other feeling which is necessary, or even laudable? Have you waited in order to render dear and sacred to your son the name of father, until he rightly knows what constitutes paternity? Have you never pronounced to him with love the name of his country, before he could form the idea of his relationship as a citizen? You wish not to allow your child the liberty of being ungrateful toward his country, and you involuntarily conduct him to the possibility of being ungrateful to his God.

What is the true object of a religious education? It is to teach the young soul to commune with God, since the consciousness of such a communion is the very essence of religion. Without the persuasion that our cry is heard; without the hope that at least a tacit answer is obtained, that blessings are poured upon us in return for the offering of prayer, there is nothing consoling, nothing regene-

rating in worship; it is no longer worship, and the lonely spirit soon ceases to present a useless homage.

Since the distinctive character of Christianity, and the means of instruction furnished by sacred books, permit us to inspire our children with the love of God, how can we avoid making use of such a privilege! How help foreseeing that this feeling, early conceived, will take deep root in the heart! If religion has a date, if the period of its birth is not lost in the weakness of infancy, if there are remembrances which have preceded it, it is not the inseparable companion of existence. Of all the ideas connected with it, that which is most likely to purify the inmost recesses of the heart, the persuasion of the presence of God, has not at once the continuity of a habit, and the depth of an unceasingly renewed impression. Perhaps at a later age we might succeed in producing it through fear; but then it would assume an inauspicious character It is at the period when all nature smiles upon us, when all our species love and protect us, that the idea of a God who befriends and watches over us, easily takes possession of our souls.